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# **A SINGLE CASE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF LOUISIANA'S INDUCTION PROGRAM ON HIGH SCHOOL BEGINNING TEACHERS**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Education

by

Lorita Ann Eichelberger  
B.A., Spelman College, 2014  
M.A., Louisiana State University, 2017  
Ed.S., Louisiana State University, 2020  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Despite the growing body of literature that suggest that beginning teachers need additional support throughout the first couple of years in the profession, there is little research on the impact of induction programs for high school beginning teachers. The purpose of this single case study was to analyze the encounters of three beginning teachers, three mentors, one teacher induction coordinator, and one administrator participating in a teacher induction program in Louisiana and examine the impact of the induction program on teacher development. This qualitative study addressed three research questions: What are the perceptions of beginning teachers about the teacher induction program? How do mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators support beginning teachers? How does the teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers? Data were collected and analyzed from the participants through the use of interviews, site documents, and the researcher's reflective notebook. Three themes emerged through the use of constant comparative technique (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The themes were: (a) understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development, (b) creating a community for beginning teacher's development, and (c) influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development. The major findings of this study were consistent with current literature; however, the study also revealed that although the program needed some improvements, overall, the teacher induction program provided sufficient support to beginning teachers at the studied school site.

# **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

## **Background Statement**

Historically, research has demonstrated that beginning teachers leave the profession within a relatively short time frame (Olebe, 2005). Unfortunately, many first-time teachers are consumed with the trials of teaching and receive little or no formalized support. Often this lack of support quickly results in a lack of confidence, job dissatisfaction, and ultimately resignation amongst novel teachers (Renard, 2003). Newly hired teachers are overwhelmed with issues such as classroom management, planning and implementing lessons, organization, lack of supplies, and time management (Martin & Mulvihill, 2017). Being inundated suggests that many beginning teachers have difficulties applying the skills, knowledge, and disposition acquired while in a teacher preparation program – their academic learning – to real-life situations throughout their first year of teaching (Ingersoll, 2012). Most teachers describe their first year of teaching as the most difficult year of teaching (Renard, 2003). Unfortunately, this time period is when the support from their academic professors is withdrawn, and the school district’s support is either very limited and/ or ineffective (Ingersoll, 2012).

This acknowledgment that rookie teachers need additional support to be successful justifies why priority should be given to new teacher’s professional development. Specifically, comprehensive teacher induction programs, which is one strategy that can assist green teachers transition into their profession. Since the early 1980s, the number of school districts that implement teacher induction programs has grown significantly (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). Gradually, school districts across the United States (US) have implemented teacher induction programs which incorporates pairing inexperienced teachers with skilled teachers. Most teacher induction programs provide orientation before the school year starts and ineffective professional development throughout the year (Ingersoll and Strong, 2004). However,



Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfen, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider, & Jacobus, 2010 urges school districts to implement strong teacher induction programs that emphasizes not only on operational and pedagogical matters but also on school culture and teacher efficacy. Additionally, effective teacher induction programs are proactive and ever-evolving to strengthen the teachers being serviced (Hudson, 2012). This type of support will take a community of investors to provide fresh teachers with the support and direction they need to become successful educators (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

### **Problem Statement**

Before exploring the specifics of effective induction programs, this section will review how research from the field of education reveals common challenges that new teachers face. Unfortunately, pre-service teachers are typically naive and often underestimate the challenges they are about to face, while also discerning teaching as being an easy job. Brock & Grady (2001) claimed that new teachers typically liked the school setting, were model students, and entered the profession of teaching because of their appreciation of learning. The school setting has been a comfortable and familiar place for them. However, when they enter this once familiar setting in the new role as a teacher, they often experience reality shock. Over three decades ago, Veenman (1984) defined reality shock as the failure of the ideal expectations formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of classroom life. Reality shock is a perception that may cause major dissatisfaction initially in beginning teachers' careers if their expectations are not met (Menon & Christou, 2002). This disconnect between an inexperienced teacher's expectations and reality is exacerbated by several other phenomena in the new teacher's experience.

In education, novice teachers assume the same exact responsibilities as 20-year veterans (Rogers & Babinski, 2002). Too often, beginning teachers are considered completed projects that

simply need adjustments, when in fact they have legitimate, ongoing learning needs. In particular, Feiman-Nemser (2003) posited that teachers can expect to reach competency within three or four years in the teaching profession, and several more years to reach proficiency. Unfortunately, the first year of teaching has been historically considered a rite of passage into the profession (Rogers & Babinski, 2002), something to endure versus paying strategic attention to the needs of teachers who are green to the profession. When compared to other occupations, such as medicine and law, which understands the needs of their beginning professionals, the field of education has been labeled “the profession that eats its young” (Halford, 1998, p. 33). Renard (2003) claimed that some seasoned teachers can associate their first years of teaching to a horror story, and view surviving these first few years as a badge of honor. Ignoring the specific needs of novel teachers is problematic.

While many fresh teachers have had terrific academic preparation and an outstanding student teaching experience, their limited experience generally yields an equally limited repertoire of teaching strategies (Sykes, Bird, & Kennedy, 2010). Among the greatest challenges perceived by mentee teachers were classroom management, motivation of students, dealing with the individual differences among students, assessing student work, and relations with parents. Inexperienced teachers must also learn to develop a professional decorum and adjust to a new school culture, and may feel overwhelmed when expectations are not made clear to them. Furthermore, schools often have sets of rules, procedures, and policies that must be learned during orientation at the beginning of the school year. Therefore, green teachers often suffer from information overload and may become frustrated because they have forgotten important information that was discussed in orientation. Many neophyte teachers find themselves initially assigned to unsuccessful, lower socioeconomic status schools, where high attrition rates produce

the greatest availability of teaching positions (Rosenholtz, 1985). At such schools, other faculty members typically have little time available to mentor or attend to newcomers' needs (Martin & Mulvihill, 2017).

Most rookie teachers are welcomed to their school, but not necessarily included or adequately supported. New teachers may also experience intense feelings of isolation and loneliness (Olebe, 2005). When beginning teachers join a close-knit staff where collegial friendships and social groups have already formed and established, developing working relationships with colleagues may become a challenge. Another challenge of novice teachers is the lack of feedback to support their professional growth. Feiman-Nemser (2003) indicated that fresh teachers may feel hesitant to discuss problems or ask for help, believing they are the only ones experiencing difficulties, and make the assumption that highly effective teachers figure things out on their own. Walsdorf & Lynn (2002) acknowledged that mentee teachers have a desire to make a good first impression, therefore, when faced with classroom problems they are reluctant to seek support from seasoned teachers, fearing that asking for help may be perceived as a sign of incompetence. This assumption also exacerbates their feelings of isolation and loneliness as well as creating feelings of inadequacy (Brock & Grady, 2001). The frustrations that new faculty members encounter when first coming to a school are understandable. Table 1 highlights issues that surface in the literature from the field of teacher induction.

Table 1. Issues and Challenges for Beginning Teachers

Novice teacher issue	Researchers	Study Year
First assignment in challenging schools	Rosenholtz	1985
	Martin & Mulvihill	2017
Limited teaching strategies	Sykes, Bird, & Kennedy	2010

(table cont'd)

Novice teacher issue	Researchers	Study Year
Feeling isolated	Brock & Grady	2001
	Olebe	2005
Lack of feedback and support	Feiman-Nemser	2003
	Martin & Mulvihill	2017
Fear of asking for help and appearing incompetent	Walsdorf & Lynn	2002
Intense workload	Rogers & Babinski	2002
Abandonment from academic professors	Ingersoll	2012

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this single case study was to investigate the unique experiences of a select group of educators participating in one school's teacher induction program in Louisiana and examine the impact of the induction program on inexperienced teacher's development. Using a qualitative, single case study, shed light on whether green teachers experienced support in the areas they believe they needed it the most and the impact of that support. The target audience for this study included teachers, schools, school districts, state educational leaders, and any other entity that has a stake in teacher professional development. This study may inform professionals who design and/ or implement teacher induction program activities by providing them with insight into educators' perspectives on induction for neophyte teachers. The findings of this study will not be generalized to all teacher induction programs, but to encourage schools that implement such programs to evaluate their effectiveness in juxtaposition to this study. Then, through evaluations, educators at all levels can potentially find solutions to improve the way induction programs support rookie teachers. This single case study did not take away from the value of induction programs, such programs are no doubt helping many new teachers. However, there is a necessity to research improvements that will enhance the program to better improve the education system.

### **Significance Statement**

The success of teacher induction programs is vital for the future of education. Quality instruction begins with quality induction (Moir, 2005). Providing induction to beginning teachers is a proactive response to the trials and tribulations related with the first couple of years of teaching as teacher acclimate to their profession. Various studies suggested that providing teachers with support systems like induction programs, mentoring, and professional development increases teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement (Wechsler, Caspary, Humphrey, & Matsko, 2010). Studies also indicated there has been a simultaneous increase in novel teachers and a decrease in seasoned teachers (Ingersoll, 2012). Fresh teachers are now the largest group within one of the largest professions in the world, and these mentee teachers have consistently become more prone to leave teaching within five years in the profession (Gray & Taie, 2015). All of these findings provided evident need for effective support programs for inexperienced teachers. Therefore, it is crucial for school districts to invest in effective teacher induction programs. Furthermore, this study is significant because although induction programs have been researched in many school districts in the US, there is limited information about the impact of teacher induction programs in Louisiana's school districts. Also, the topic has a personal significance for me as the researcher given my role as a former green teacher. My role as researcher was to not only research educators' perspectives on a selected Louisiana's teacher induction program but to also understand the impact of the program. This purpose gave me insight on how to conduct additional research to provide effective supportive strategies for neophyte teachers to guide their practices.

### **Research Questions**

Three questions framed this single case study. The questions are listed here:

1. What are the perceptions of beginning teachers about the teacher induction program?

Beginning teachers are anxious about lack of preparation time, needs of diverse students, time constraints, massive workload, and lack of support from colleagues and administrators (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). This question will allow beginning teachers to voice the good, the bad, and the ugly of teacher induction programs.

Understanding perceptions may increase teacher efficacy and decrease teacher burn out.

2. How do mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators support beginning teachers? (Fisher & Ociepka, 2011) argued that a quality teacher induction program involves a community of educators working together to improve instruction and student achievement. The theoretical framework of this study explores the four stages of teacher development outlined by Katz (1972) and mentor-mentee relationships proposed by Kram (1983). Thus, this research question will allow the researcher to see which of these stages are included and which stages are perhaps neglected.

3. How does the teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers? Very little research has been written about how teacher induction programs impact teacher education in Louisiana. However, many researchers agree that teacher induction programs are effective when designed to offer support by providing, orientation, on-the-job professional development, and ongoing mentorship and collaboration, which accelerates the beginning teachers' effectiveness and increases student achievement (Lopez, Lash, Schaffner, Shields, & Wagner, 2004).

Therefore, the purpose of this research question is to reflect upon the effects of participating in the teacher induction program.

Overall, these research questions are aligned with Creswell's (2018) notion that "research questions should be open-ended, evolving, non-directional, few in number" and provide the foundation for a review of the literature and consecutive research (p. 138).

### **Definition of Terms**

The terminology used in the discussion of teacher induction programs can be potentially confusing. Often, there are key terms that are used interchangeably. For the purpose of clarity in this study, the following terms have been defined and supported within the research:

**Beginning Teacher (Fresh, Green, Inexperienced, Novice, Neophyte, or Rookie Teacher).** A full-time certified teacher with no prior teaching experience who entered the profession of teaching. For the purpose of this study a new teacher has 0-3 years of teaching experience (Dempsey & Carty, 2009).

**Highly Effective Teacher.** A teacher who has a positive effect on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communications/interpersonal skills. Quality teachers are life-long learners in their subject areas, teach with commitment, and are reflective upon their teaching practice. They transfer knowledge of their subject matter and the learning process through good communication, diagnostic skills, understanding of different learning styles and cultural influences, knowledge about child development, and the ability to marshal a broad array of techniques to meet student needs. They set high expectations and support students in achieving them. They establish an environment conducive to learning and leverage available resources outside as well as inside the classroom (Varlas, 2009).

**Job Satisfaction.** A feeling of fulfillment or enjoyment that a person derives from their job whether or not they like the job or individual aspects of jobs, such as nature of work or supervision. Job satisfaction can be measured in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components (Ho & Au, 2006; Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010; Nagar, 2012; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995).

**Mentee.** A beginning teacher who is assigned to a mentor for proper guidance in professional development (Andrews, Gilbert, & Martin, 2006).

**Mentor.** A more experienced teacher who is paired with a new or struggling teacher to provide guidance and support. The types of support provided by mentors may include observations, conferences, lesson modeling, data analysis, and coaching. Generally, a mentor taught the same content, however exceptions are made where this was not possible (Andrews, et al., 2006).

**Pedagogical Content Knowledge.** Knowledge on how to present concepts so that students will understand them, which concepts are easy for students and which concepts will present difficulties for students, and common misconceptions that students make in the subject area (Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers, & Sivanson, 2010).

**Professional Development.** Is a formal or informal ever-evolving support that improve teacher's content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, and overall student achievement. Professional development can take the form of a conference, seminar, workshop, collaborative learning communities, research, collegiate coursework, or even mentoring (Mizell, 2010).

**Retention.** Means to retain teachers in the field of education. Teachers were considered retained if they returned in any teaching capacity, including changing positions or buildings.



Teachers were not considered retained if they left the district for any reason, even if they remained in the field of education or took a similar position in another district (Anderson, 2010).

**Student Achievement.** Measures the amount of academic content a student learns in a determined amount of time. Each grade level has learning goals or instructional standards that educators are required to teach and students are required to learn (Blank & De Las Alas, 2009).

**Subject Matter Content Knowledge.** Teachers understanding of the subject(s) they are teaching, knowing the structure and sequencing of concepts, developing factual knowledge essential to each subject and guiding their students into the different ways of understanding the content they are learning (Blömeke, 2015).

**Support.** A wide variety of professional development activities and school resources provided to teachers in the effort to help them accelerate their students learning progress (Keilwitz, 2014).

**Teacher Induction Program.** A program that provides new teachers with support and resources to fulfill the requirements of being an effective teacher. A variety of different types of activities for new teachers include orientation, professional development, extra classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and especially mentoring (Ingersoll & Strong, 2004).

**Teacher Self-Efficacy.** When a teacher believes in their own ability to guide their students to success (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

### **Summary**

Chapter One provided the rationale of this study. The art of becoming an effective teacher is not something that happens overnight; yet, most new teachers are faced with this dilemma. Baccalaureate graduates who apply and accept a teaching position are often required to carry out the same responsibilities and function as the seasoned teacher in the next classroom.

The new tasks they are expected to learn and master range from school culture to human resources to developing and implementing curriculum to classroom management. Providing beginning teachers with support programs can alleviate them with such burdens. A well-planned and implemented induction program considers the needs of novice teachers and the students they serve. This research study adds to the minimal amount of research that exists on the impact of teacher induction programs. The findings will help district leaders and school administrators design and implement teacher induction programs with components associated with higher probabilities of fresh teacher's job satisfaction, self-efficacy, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement.

The following chapters support the purpose of this study. In Chapter Two, the literature was reviewed. In Chapter Three, the methodology for the study was described. In Chapter Four, I reported the findings. Finally, in Chapter Five, I provided an in-depth discussion of the findings, presented implications, and offer further avenues for research in teacher induction.

## **CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of Chapter Two was to review literature that influence the methods of supporting beginning teachers. The literature review was employed to support the perspectives of educators participating in the teacher induction program and the impact of the program on novice teacher's development in a large Louisiana school district. First, the process of analyzing literature in the field of teacher developed was described. Second, the theoretical framework is outlined with the exploration of Katz's perception of teacher's professional development needs at various stages in their career; and description of Kram's four stages of mentor-mentee relationship. Third, a summary of the different types of teacher's knowledge. Fourth, a historic overview of teacher induction programs. Fifth, the evolution of teacher induction programs in the state of Louisiana. Sixth, a description of how teacher induction programs impact beginning teachers. Seventh, components of effective induction programs for new teachers. Lastly, the roles and responsibilities of mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators in supporting beginning teachers. This literature review begins with the process of conducting the literature view for this study.

### **Literature Review Procedure**

A literature review is a written summary and analysis of journals, articles, books and other documents that describe the past and current state of information on the topic of the researcher's study. According to Marshall and Rossman (1989), a review of the literature has the following purposes: to provide foundation of knowledge on the topic, to show evidence of research to support the study, to identify inconsistencies and gaps with previous studies, to establish a need for additional research, and to refine the research questions based on findings in

the literature. Previous research was studied to demonstrate that teacher induction has not, to this date, been adequately explored as it relates to the characteristics of effective teacher induction programs and the impact new teacher's professional development. This chapter was also used to help develop explanations during data collection and analysis procedures, which provided theoretical lens to organize the data while discovering the new connections between theory and the real world.

This literature review was conducted using online access to the Louisiana State University Library, the local school district and state of Louisiana websites, the researcher's local public library system, Louisiana State University coursework textbooks, and professional literature recommended by professors in the Doctoral of Educational Leadership P-12 program. The online libraries utilized provided access to various research databases, including the Education Resource Information Center (ERIC), Sage online journals, Academic Search Complete, PsycTESTS, and Dissertations and Thesis A&I. Articles related to teacher induction programs, challenges of new teachers, needs of new teachers, role and characteristics of mentors, induction coordinators, and principals, and effective professional development practices were researched to synthesize what other researchers have already stated and formulated common themes about the study. The following search terms and phrases were used to gain access to the articles: teacher induction programs, new teacher orientation, support for new teachers, mentoring, instructional coach, effective professional development, challenges of new teachers, teacher education, teacher preparation, components of effective induction programs, program evaluation, first year teachers , Katz's Stages of teacher development, and Kram's stages of mentor-mentee relationship were reviewed, and those descriptors were coupled with job satisfaction, teacher efficacy, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement. Other

search terms were qualitative research design and single case study. In addition to the previous listed sources, references were obtained from the references sections of other researchers and investigated for related information. Next, this literature review continues with the theoretical framework for this single case study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework explains the focus of any study (Creswell, 2018). The phenomenon of interest for this single case study is to examine the perspectives of educators participating in the teacher induction program in Louisiana and explore the impact of the induction program on teacher professional development. It is crucial for school districts to provide adequate support to novice teachers. Greenhorn teachers need time to become effective in an environment where “new teachers have two jobs: they have to teach and they have to learn how to teach” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1026). Thus, a comprehensive teacher induction program does not just focus on retaining apprentice teachers but is a multi-year journey focused on the development of effective teachers (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Therefore, researchers of this topic pointed to various theories such as the four stages of teacher development (Katz, 1972) and four phases of mentoring (Kram, 1983). Taken together, the above-mentioned theories provided a theoretical groundwork for teacher education and supported the study’s research questions.

#### **Katz’s Theory of Teacher Development**

Katz’s (1972) study of teacher development was based on preschool teachers, however she claimed it could be applied to other teachers. The purpose of the study Katz (1972) conducted was to outline the professional development needs of teachers at different points in their teaching career. Based on her findings she suggested that there is a minimum of four

developmental stages: survival, consolidation, renewal, and maturity (Katz, 1972). These developmental stages may assist in explaining teachers' actions in the classroom. Logically, teachers in the beginning stage may have basic survival needs while teachers in the later stages may seek their own professional development relating to individualized students' learning needs. A mentor's knowledge about the different stages of development can help determine the types of support that will best facilitate mentoring (Katz & Raths, 1990). Assuming that a teacher's years of experience are directly related to the teacher's developmental stage is erroneous thinking (Katz & Raths, 1990). Each teacher matriculates through these stages at different rates (Katz, 1972). This study was selected because I want to explore teacher development and how I can best support new and/or struggling teachers.

Katz's (1972) study found that the first stage, the *survival stage*, generally occurs during the first year of teaching. Teachers realized that what they had anticipated from their undergraduate program was not their reality inside the actual classroom (Katz, 1972). The major concern of teachers was dealing with daily task and questioning their competence for effectively teaching (Katz, 1972). Although teachers initially felt ready to enter the classroom, teachers in this first stage lose these feelings, and simply wish to survive each day (Katz, 1972). This concern with survival may make new teachers ask, "Can I get through this day or week (Katz & Raths, 1990, p. 242)?" When observing teachers in the survival stage, they tend to not have clear rules and consistent procedures in the classroom for managing student's behavior (Katz, 1972). They also tend to react to students' behaviors rather than anticipate and prevent potential problems by using preventive management strategies (Katz, 1972). The teaching style is typically teacher center with little to no interactions between the students (Katz, 1972).

During this stage teachers definitely need continuous support, understanding, encouragement, reassurance, comfort and guidance (Katz & Rath, 1990). Training is needed in specific skills related to classroom management, content and pedagogical knowledge, all of which must be provided inside the teacher's classroom (Katz & Rath, 1990). Mentoring must be consistently and readily available from someone who knows both the mentee and level of teaching competency (Katz & Rath, 1990). Additionally, teachers should be assigned a mentor usually a seasoned teacher to support professional development (Katz, 1972). The mentor must also have enough time and flexibility to be on call as needed by the mentee (Katz & Rath, 1990). Although the mentor may schedule periodic visits in advanced, this method should not be counted on to coincide with mentees' real-time classroom emergencies (Katz & Rath, 1990).

In the second stage, the *consolidation stage*, Katz (1972) observed teachers figuring out what they learned in the survival stage, and consolidating their learning and knowledge. Teachers began to focus more on instruction and the individual needs of their students (Katz, 1972). Katz (1972) highlighted the major difference between the first stage and second stage was that during stage one, beginning teachers obtain a basic understanding of what students are like and what to expect of them. By stage two, novice teachers start to recognize specific goals for students, and organize specific tasks and skills on which individual students should work on (Katz, 1972). This motivation may allow teachers to search for answers to the question "How can I help a child who does not seem to be learning." (Katz & Rath, 1990, p. 245). This question is now differentiated from the typical survival issues of classroom management in the first stage (Katz & Rath, 1990). When observing teachers in the second stage, teachers have managed to implement clear rules and consistent procedures for students with no special commendations

(Katz, 1972). Katz (1972) found that this stage may take place through the second year of teaching, and continue into the third year.

During this consolidation stage, mentoring is still valuable (Katz & Raths, 1990). Mentors can help mentees through mutual exploration of a problem (Katz & Raths, 1990). In order for teachers to jointly find solutions to the fresh teacher's problems, the mentor must observe the mentee interactions with students, to gain firsthand knowledge of the context of the problem (Katz & Raths, 1990). Furthermore, observations of the mentee's classroom allow the discussion between the inexperienced teacher and veteran teacher move toward a solution to a problem (Katz & Raths, 1990). Also, in this stage teachers seek information about specific students such as problem students and use a wider range of resources to support most students (Katz, 1972). Therefore, psychologists, social and health workers and other specialists can enhance the green teacher's skills and understanding about child development (Katz & Raths, 1990). Another way to help teachers is to provide them with opportunities to share feelings with other teachers in the consolidation stage (Katz, 1972). This may relieve some of the teacher's sense of professional inadequacy and frustration (Katz, 1972).

According to Katz, the *renewal stage*, teachers are often in their third or fourth year of teaching (Katz, 1972). During this stage, teachers develop a desire to learn new methods of teaching, to escape from teaching the same way (Katz, 1972). Teachers in Katz (1972) study sought to renew their teaching styles, by trying new materials, techniques, and ideas. The idea of renewal was not necessarily because the teacher felt that the current teaching style was not competent or not student-centered (Katz, 1972). During this stage, students may be learning well, however, the teachers' search for renewal was often a personal one to refresh the teachers' own views of teaching (Katz, 1972). They begin to ask more questions about new developments in



the education profession, such as, “What are some new approaches to helping children learn?” (Katz & Rath, 1990, p. 248)? When observing this teacher during this stage, the classroom is likely to be well-managed where students are actively engaged in tasks appropriate for their learning needs (Katz, 1972).

During the renewal stage, teachers find it valuable to formally and informally meet educators from different programs (Katz & Rath, 1990). Teachers are also interested in attending regional meetings, conferences, and workshops and benefit from becoming members in professional associations (Katz, 1972). Furthermore, their reading expands to include professional journals (Katz, 1972). The goal is to provide opportunities for teachers in this stage to collaborate with other teachers about different pedagogy strategies and continuously follow up on the new methods learned (Katz & Rath, 1990).

Finally, in the *maturity stage*, Katz (1972) found that some teachers are still interested in learning new ideas and resources, but begin to think deeper about their philosophy of teaching and its impact on student achievement. This could occur within three years, but in most cases, reaching maturity can take about five years (Katz, 1972). Teachers in the final maturity stage had learned the basics of teaching, and felt secure in their profession (Katz & Rath, 1990). Mature teachers now have enough experience to ask deeper and more abstract questions like, “What are my historical and philosophical roots (Katz & Rath, 1990, p. 251)?” When observing a teacher during the fourth stage, the classroom is typically like the classroom in the third stage (Katz, 1972). However, the difference is observed through discussions with the teacher (Katz, 1972). The discussions tend to be insightful about the teacher’s philosophy on teaching and learning (Katz, 1972).

During this final stage, mature teachers still seek opportunities to participate in conferences and workshops (Katz, 1972). They may decide to go back to school to complete a professional degree (Katz & Raths, 1990). These seasoned teachers enjoy researching new methods in the education world and welcome the opportunity to discuss these findings with other educators (Katz, 1972). Also, teachers at this stage are ready to accept leadership roles such as mentoring new teachers (Katz, 1972). These teachers often make excellent mentors because they have experienced all of the developmental stages of teachers and understand the frustrations and needs of teachers matriculating through each developmental stage (Katz, 1972).

Furthermore, teachers do not advance through each stage independent from other circumstances in one's life (Katz, 1972). Contingent on personal and professional factors, it is likely that teachers may fluctuate through stages (Katz, 1972). For example, if a teacher goes through a major life crisis, such as a death of a loved one, divorce, or relocation, teachers commonly, experience a drop to a lower developmental stage as they cope with this traumatic experience (Katz, 1972). Also, if a teacher moves to a new school or perhaps new grade level, the teacher is likely to experience the survival stage again (Katz, 1972). This stage may pass quickly as the teacher recalls on past experience to function in the new school environment (Katz, 1972). Additionally, a change from a suburban to urban school setting may also result in a teacher dropping to a lower developmental stage (Katz, 1972). Again, the teacher may move back up to a higher developmental stage given the proper support on dealing with this drastic change in school culture (Katz, 1972). Figure 1 outlines the stages of beginning teacher's training and development. In the next section of this literature review, stages of mentoring will be discussed. Given the mentor-mentee relationship inherent in an induction program, this

review of literature is germane to the study. Kram's work is considered seminal in the field of mentoring (1983).

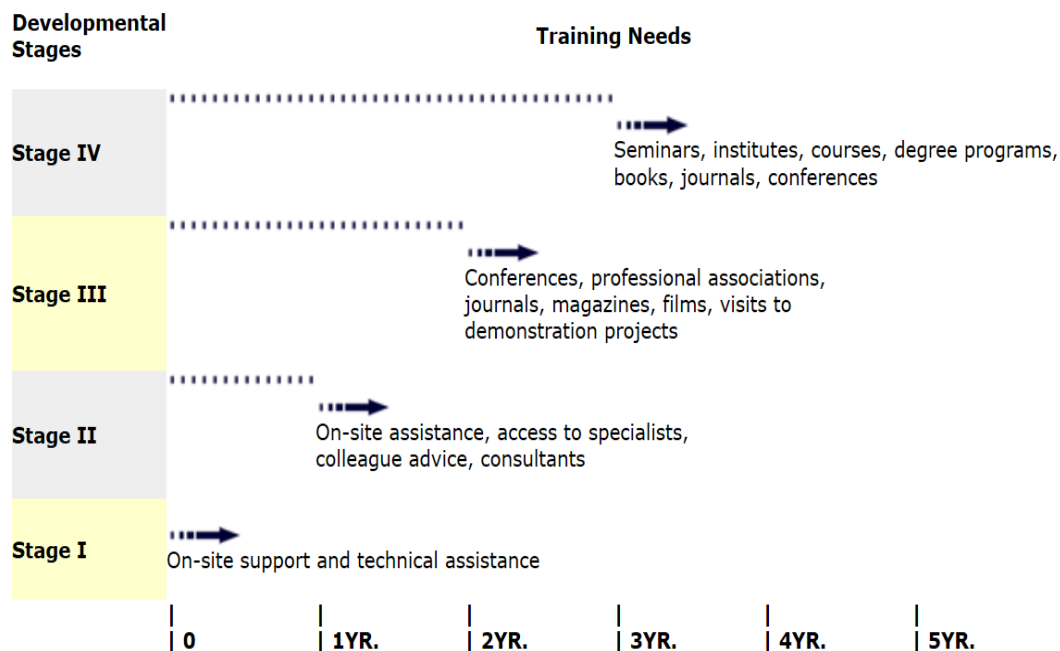


Figure 1. Stages of Development and Training Needs of Beginning Teachers (Katz & Rath, 1990, p. 253).

### Kram's Theory of Mentoring

Kram (1983) was one of the first researchers to explore the positive aspects of mentoring and observed that mentoring was based on an individual's need for psychosocial support, guidance to accomplish assignments, and career advancement. In her seminal study, Kram (1985) discovered that a mentor-mentee relationship went through four stages: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. Although a mentoring relationship has a life cycle with various stages of development, each mentoring relationship has its own unique time frame to fulfill teacher induction program requirements (Kram, 1983). Regardless of the context or lifecycle of the relationship, the assumption is that the mentoring relationship is dynamic, ever evolving, changing the nature of the mentee-mentor interaction through time. Kram (1985)

highlights the lifecycle concept as each person having different roles, expectations, and set of behaviors at each phase of the lifecycle. Successful progression into a phase relies upon the successful resolution of the previous phase (Otto, 1994). The ultimate goal of the mentor-trainee relationship is the promotion and development of a highly effective educator (Otto, 1994). This section will briefly describe the various stages that the mentee and mentor are expected to undergo while the collaborative partnership evolves.

During the first stage, *initiation*, two individuals enter into a mentoring relationship (Kram, 1983). It takes approximately six to 12 months for the mentoring relationship to form (Kram, 1985). New teachers, mentees, search for experienced and effective teachers, mentors, whom they admire and perceive as good role models (Otto, 1994). Potential mentors search for teachers who are coachable (Kram, 1985). Both individuals pursue a positive, influential relationship that would justify the extra time and effort required in mentoring. Over time, the mentor and mentee may establish an emotional bond where they get to know one another as a result of frequent interactions. During this stage, peer observation and professional development can also transpire (Kram, 1983). The mentor is responsible for collaborating with the mentee to assist in setting goals, modeling, observing, and providing feedback (Ojewunmi, 2011). The mentee is expected to be receptive to the mentor's support.

Novice teachers and seasoned teachers can informally and formally establish a mentoring relationship (Otto, 1994). Informal mentoring allows the matching process to transpire through professional or social interactions between potential mentors and mentees (Otto, 1994). Formal mentoring programs manage the matching process instead of letting these relationships develop on their own (Otto, 1994). The assignment of a mentee to a mentor differs for each formal teacher induction program (Otto, 1994). Program coordinators may match mentors and mentees

or allow mentors to review mentee profiles and select their mentees (Otto, 1994). Regardless of the matching process, an effective formal mentoring program would require both individuals to explore and evaluate the appropriateness of the mentor–mentee relationship.

During the second stage, *cultivation*, the primary stage of learning and development (Kram, 1983). This stage lasts from two to five years which is the longest period in the mentoring relationship (Kram, 1985). Assuming a successful initiation stage, during the cultivation stage, the mentee and mentor learn from each other (Kram, 1983). The mentee may also impart valuable lessons to the mentor related to new technologies, new methodologies, and emerging issues in the field of education (Ojewunmi, 2011). At this juncture, the mentor has modeled acceptable behavior, which influence the behavior of the mentee (Ojewunmi, 2011). Modeling is defined as “learning through imitation... the teacher acts and models a preferred way of teaching... in actual situations” (Bashan & Holsblat, 2012, p. 207). In the field of education, modeling is a vital aspect of mentoring because mentees enhance their practice gained by practical experience, which result in better students’ performance (Bashan & Holsblat, 2012). Additionally, the mentor coaches the mentee on how to work effectively and efficiently. This stage concludes when the green teacher completes the teacher induction program (Kram, 1983). Overall, the mentee is expected to be an effective teacher that increases student achievement.

During the third stage, *separation*, mentees experience autonomy and act independently (Kram, 1983). It occurs typically after five years (Kram, 1985). At this point, mentors may feel a sense of accomplishment and pride due to investing a significant amount of time and effort to prepare mentees to become highly effective teachers (Kram, 1983). However, unprepared mentees may experience disappointment and frustration when given more autonomy and need to handle things independently (Kram, 1985). During this stage, the seasoned teacher shares self-

management strategies with the developing teacher (Kram, 1983). The separation stage generally describes the conclusion of a mentoring relationship where the mentee can meet the mentor on a need basis to guide them back on track (Kram, 1985).

The mentoring relationship may conclude for a variety of reasons. The mentee may not have anything else to learn, the developing teacher may want to establish independence, or the seasoned teacher may believe the new teacher is ready for independence (Kram, 1983). Problems only occur between the individuals when either the mentee or mentor does not want to terminate the mentoring relationship (Kram, 1983). The mentee may feel abandoned or unprepared if he or she perceives the separation is premature (Kram, 1985). The mentor may feel betrayed or used if the mentee no longer seeks guidance from him or her (Kram, 1985). If the separation stage is mutual the new teacher, now a competent teacher might have been advanced within the current school or even left the school to teach elsewhere (Kram, 1983). Kram (1985) claims that the former mentee loses the sense of security provided by the mentor and the mentor loses direct influence over the mentee's career.

During the last stage, *redefinition*, the mentor and mentee intermingle on an informal basis and may continue their friendship (Kram, 1983). Just like the separation stage, the redefinition stage generally happens after five years (Kram, 1985). Mentors and mentees tend to benefit from the relationship. In short, the mentor's career is reenergized and may even result in a promotion. (Kram, 1983). Likewise, beginning teachers who received mentoring in conjunction with additional support from the teacher induction program makes greater gains in teaching effectively than beginning teachers supported solely by a teacher induction program (Stanulis & Floden, 2009). If the mentee or mentor's experience was not pleasant, the result may be that the two individuals grow apart and may even undergo alienation (Kram, 1983). However, if both

individuals successfully negotiate through the separation stage, during the redefinition stage, the mentor and mentee relationship evolves as into a collegial relationship or social friendship (Kram, 1985).

In the beginning, there may be discomfort leading to the transformation of a new learning journey. Both the mentor and mentee soon recognize that their relationship can continue however that it will not be the same as their mentoring relationship (Kram, 1985). The relationship has evolved. Unlike the cultivation stage, the mentee's career development is no longer the focus of the relationship (Kram, 1983). In fact, due to formal mentee's high potential they may accept middle management promotion opportunities (Kram, 1983). The former mentor may start mentoring relationships with new mentees. Similarly, the former mentee may serve as a future mentor to others. Figure 2 illustrates the stages of mentoring relationship process.

0-6 Months	6-24 Months	24-36 Months	Indeterminate
Initiating	Cultivating	Separating	Redefining
Suspicion evolves into respect and mutual trust	Trust and intimacy grows alongside confidence and ability	Offering and accepting operating freedom	Peer friendship evolves

Figure 2. Stages of Mentoring Relationship Process (Kram, 1983, p. 611)

Both Katz (1972) and Kram (1983) inform thinking about teacher development in the context of a mentoring-mentee relationship. These seminal researchers conducted early studies within the teacher development field. Since their work was published, additional studies have been conducted that also contribute to the field and educators' understanding of early career

teacher development. Next, specific studies that investigate the specific fields of knowledge novice teachers need to be successful.

### **What New Teachers Need to Know?**

Teaching requires a variety of knowledge and pedagogical skills, knowledge about students, knowledge about styles of teaching and learning, knowledge about management, knowledge about resources and assessment as well as knowledge about the content of the subject matter (Blömeke, 2015). This section of the literature examines some of the components for instructional practices that are typically viewed as key when developing a culture of effective teaching. These principles include: subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and classroom management. Through the application of these principles, effective teachers can both challenge individual students and have high expectations for all of their students to make developmental progress (Clarke, 2008).

#### **Subject Content Knowledge**

Subject content knowledge is the actual knowledge teachers are expected to deeply understand to teach their students (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008). For example, teachers may need to have a thorough understanding of a Shakespeare play in order to effectively teach it to students (Blömeke, 2015). The focus of subject knowledge has a very important role in education because high-quality teaching relies on teachers understanding the subjects they are teaching, identifying the structure and sequence of concepts, developing accurate knowledge, and guiding their student's learning with different methods (Corcoran, 1995). Helping students learn concepts involves more than delivering facts and information. The goal of teaching is to guide students in developing intellectual ideas, skills, and resources to solve every day real-world problems (Blömeke, 2015). Students should see themselves, either alone or in collaboration with others, and capable of figuring things out (Hightower et al., 2010). To accomplish this goal, teachers



need to conceptually master the subject matter and have the capacity to be critical of knowledge itself in order to empower students to be change agents in their environment (Corcoran, 1995).

Conant (1963) wrote that “if a teacher is largely ignorant or uniformed, he can do much harm” (p. 93). Hence, when teachers possess inaccurate information or conceive knowledge in limited ways, they may share these ideas to their students. Teachers may fail to challenge students’ thinking and misconceptions; they may use texts uncritically or may alter them inappropriately (Hightower et al., 2010). Subtly, teachers’ conceptions of knowledge shape their practice, such as the kinds of questions they ask, the ideas they reinforce, the sorts of tasks they assign (Hightower et al., 2010). Therefore, it is common sense that support the conviction that subject content knowledge is important because teachers’ own content knowledge influences their efforts to help students learn subject matter. Effective teaching is not only the teacher’s own subject knowledge, but the way the teacher delivers the knowledge. In order to support beginning teachers with developing deep understanding of the content there are teaching, instructional leaders must create an environment where teacher development is valued (Blömeke, 2015). In such case, instructional leaders may challenge beginning teachers in rich dialogue and feedback that could lead to substantial improvements in their understanding of the content matter (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). They also must create opportunities for teachers to collaborate in subject area department meetings to reflect and share teaching practices with one another.

### **Pedagogical Content Knowledge**

The term pedagogy stems from the Greek word that means “the art of teaching children (Hightower et al., 2010, p. 13).” The pedagogical knowledge of teachers includes all the required cognitive knowledge for creating effective teaching and learning environments (Hightower et al., 2010). The concept of pedagogical content knowledge is not new. The term resurfaced with

Shulman (1986), a teacher education researcher who was interested in expanding and improving knowledge on teaching and teacher preparation. He claimed that developing basic pedagogical skills was insufficient for preparing teachers as was trainings that stressed only content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). Pedagogical content knowledge is the teacher's interpretations and transformations of subject content knowledge in the context of guiding student learning (Hightower et al., 2010). For example, how can Shakespearian language be made more accessible for students to help them understand the story and context of the play (Blömeke, 2015)?

Pedagogical content knowledge involves the recognition of what makes specific concepts difficult to learn, the preconceived conceptions students have of these concepts, and teaching strategies tailored to student's specific learning needs (Blömeke, 2015). To teach all students based on current 21<sup>st</sup> century academic standards, teachers definitely need to understand pedagogical content knowledge in-depth so they can support students to create their own ideas, relate one idea to another, and redirect their thinking to create powerful learning (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). Having thoughtful pedagogical skills can improve the quality of teacher's instruction and the way students learn by helping them gain a deeper understanding of fundamental material. This approach helps students reach beyond simplistic ways of thinking, like basic memorization and comprehension, to complex learning processes like analysis, evaluation, and creation (Shulman, 1986).

Teachers also need to perceive how ideas connect across various subjects and to everyday life, which are the goals of pedagogical content knowledge. Effective content teaching is at the core of pedagogical content knowledge (Blömeke, 2015). To accomplish this, instructional leaders need to resist some old traditions in professional learning. Instead, instructional leaders

should commit to high quality professional development targeted to develop this type of expertise. As a result of professional support, teacher's growth indirectly leads to student's academic success (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). In addition to subject and pedagogy knowledge, classroom management cultivates a supportive learning environment that allows students to think critically, experiment with the material, and be open to constructive feedback.

### **Classroom Management**

Empirical research studies revealed that classroom management is one of the major factors to effective teaching, but also one of the most challenging components of effective teaching (Corbell et al, 2010). Classroom management involves the adjustment of procedures with school policy, implementation of consistent and effective routines, and the management of discipline conducive to learning (Langdon et al, 2014). Obviously, the ultimate goal for any teacher is an academically productive classroom with engaged students. To achieve this goal, teachers should plan and implement daily classroom routines and procedures of interaction that alleviate misbehaviors and distractions. The bottom line is that effective classroom management is an absolute must. It impacts teacher's ability to be an effective educator, job satisfaction, and influence students' success as learners (Langdon et al, 2014). If the classroom is out of control, it does matter how passionate the teacher is about their subject or how much they are truly dedicated to teaching students, learning will be negatively impacted.

There is no doubt that dynamic curriculum and a strong rapport with students are both desirable. However, it may not be enough to maintain effective classroom management. Fortunately, there is a wealth of knowledge that, if taught and practiced, could help lessen the learning curve of inexperienced teachers. Obviously, experience helps, but the capacity to achieve a well-managed classroom does not have to be learned through trial and error from years

of teaching experience (Langdon et al, 2014). Instructional leaders should impart this knowledge to new teachers, developing classroom management competence in them through instruction and practice. As a result, this will create a cycle of teachers creating a classroom culture that helps build relationships with students that produces a functional and productive environment for teaching and learning (Blömeke, 2015).

Effective teaching composes of deep subject knowledge, operative pedagogical skills, and an encouraging learning environment. In order to be a dynamic teacher all three components must be present. If one element is missing, the classroom environment may not be suitable for teaching or learning. Unfortunately, for many beginning teachers at least one of the components of effective teaching needs guidance. This realization was one of the main reasons for training new teachers through induction programs. Subsequently, the literature review will provide a historic overview of teacher induction programs in the US.

### **An Overview of Teacher Induction Programs**

Establishing an induction program for new teachers is not a new concept; it is an idea that has gained considerable momentum in the past several decades. The literature on orientation for the teaching profession has its origins in the 1950s and 1960s in the US, where mandatory schooling and the professional development of teachers were being questioned in the post-war period (Serpell, 2000). In the late 1950s, significant practical changes in teacher education began as a result of a series of grants distributed by the Ford Foundation (Elias, 1980). These grants were intended to facilitate the development of fifth-year programs that would extend teacher preparation to an internship in which perspective teachers would learn how to integrate theory and practice. Similar to the Ford Foundation's support for fifth-year programs, another movement for improving teacher education in the mid-1960s derived from federal funding, Teacher Corps (Elias, 1980). Many of the Teacher Corps developments supported certified

teachers and liberal arts college graduates. Although the distinction was not clearly articulated, fifth-year programs were not necessarily induction programs and despite ongoing discussion about the intentions of fifth-year programs, the internship itself did not seem to prevent or solve new teachers' problems (McDonald, 1982).

During this era, a large number of pilot induction programs were started to address and potentially solve problems new teachers faced. The most pressing problems expressed by new teachers tended to be classroom management and teaching strategies (Darling-Hammond, 1995). Historically, induction programs were conceptualized as a way of amending these recognized difficulties by compensating for what was perceived as the inadequacy of teacher education programs in preparing teachers for actual practice (Elias, 1980). While the idea of teacher induction programs has evolved and changed with increasing interest in the topic, induction was founded with four broad primary goals: socializing the teacher into the school culture, improving teaching skills, resolving beginning teachers' predictable concerns, and assuring teachers' professional development (McDonald, 1982). The spread of induction programs supported by states and school districts prompted the inclusion of two additional goals: increasing retention among promising new teachers and satisfying mandated requirements related to induction and certification (Hu ling-Austin, 1989).

Odell (1990) observed the rapidity of the implementation of induction programs. She reported that in 1980, Florida was the only state that provided formal support to new teachers through mentoring. By 1987, 11 states were implementing induction programs, six states were piloting induction programs, 15 were planning to implement an induction program, and 19 reported no activity of additional support for new teachers (Odell, 1990). In 1989, the number of states having an induction program increased to 31, with only eight reporting no activity (Odell,

1990). Although most states during this time had an induction program for new teachers, some have yet made it mandatory for new teachers to participate in or school districts to implement. In 1991, 51% of new teachers participated in a teacher induction program and by 2012, 85% of new teachers did (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014, p. 5).

Although many states have some form of support for new teachers, the effectiveness of these programs became questionable. Zeichner (1979), concerned with the diversity of induction programs, he recommended that the education of a teacher should extend beyond the preparation period and continue throughout a teacher's career. He indicated that this recommendation had first been implemented in the late nineteenth century (Zeichner, 1979). In 2014, 29 states required new teachers to participate in a teacher induction program, and as a result, more new teachers received mentoring through induction programs than ever before. Additionally, nine of those states required support for new teachers beyond their first two years of teaching (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). Louisiana was one of the states that believed that their new prospects needed additional support during their first couple of years of teaching. As a result, the state implemented several initiatives in hopes of having a positive impact on beginning teachers' development and commitment. The evolution of Louisiana's induction programs was addressed in the following section of this literature review.

### **Teacher Induction Programs in Louisiana**

Like many other states, Louisiana seen a demand for providing support for new teachers. In 1994, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) implemented the Louisiana Teacher Assessment Program (LaTAP) which had some, but not all the components of an effective new teacher induction program (The Louisiana Department of Education, 2019). This program had two purposes: to improve teaching and learning and to ensure that certified teachers in Louisiana

were competent professionals (Rosselli, Girod, & Brodsky, 2011). To accomplish this, the teacher went through a series of classroom observations and interviews that were designed to collect data which were directly related to the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching (LCET) (Rosselli, et al., 2011). If a new teacher did not complete the assessment program during the first year and was allowed to return for a second year, the new teacher had to demonstrate competence by the end of that second year, or he/she was denied regular certification in Louisiana public schools for at least two years (The Louisiana Department of Education, 1995).

In 1997, the legislature, realized the need to provide more assistance for new teachers and renamed the program to the Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (The Louisiana Department of Education, 1998). The program also amended to include a mentoring component. Mentor teachers are assigned to mentee teachers for support for both semesters (Rosselli, et al., 2011). The new teacher was assigned an assessment team to ensure professional competence during the second semester (Rosselli, et al., 2011). The mentor had no part in the assessment process or in recommendation for future certification in Louisiana (The Louisiana Department of Education, 1998).

In 2001, as Louisiana strengthened its efforts in school and district accountability, the need for a stable and qualified teaching force became clearly evident. During this time, the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Teacher Quality had established statewide goals for K-12 schools and higher education institutions that would improve student achievement (The Louisiana Department of Education, 2002). The commission had also concluded that improving teacher quality was essential to achieving this statewide goal (Rosselli, et al., 2011). To accomplish these goals Louisiana's Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers (FIRST) was created and implemented (Rosselli, et al., 2011). The program was an innovative program

designed to equip Louisiana school districts with resources that would meet the needs of Louisiana's new teachers in an effective and efficient manner (The Louisiana Department of Education, 2002).

Today, with the aim of supporting new teachers and contribute to the enrichment of students' learning, the Beginning Educator Success Track (B.E.S.T.) was developed (The Louisiana Department of Education, 2019). The program serves as a teacher induction program for teachers with 0-3 years of experience and teachers that are new to the district to improve the recruitment, retention, & success of new teachers (Rosselli, et al., 2011). The program is set to engage teachers in job-embedded professional development that is centered around mentoring and induction practices, the Louisiana Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric (COMPASS), and the successful implementation of the Louisiana State Standards (The Louisiana Department of Education, 2019). Throughout the progression of induction programs in Louisiana, the intent remains to improve new teacher self-efficacy, accelerate the process of becoming an effective teacher, and increase fresh teacher retention. Thus, a comprehensive teacher induction program will provide multiple opportunities for beginning teachers to feel confident while reflecting on how to enhance their teaching abilities. The next segment of this literature review highlighted the effects of participating in a teacher induction program.

### **The Impact of Teacher Induction Programs**

When new teachers enter the world of education, they are eager to meet the needs of their students. These inexperienced teachers rely on their educational degrees and teaching internships to suit up for this new world. There is a great deal of researched literature that documents the struggles new teachers face in their early classroom years. School districts have designed support systems to guide new teachers during this fragile stage in their career. The concept of teacher induction programs has been implemented for decades. Since the early 1980s, there have been



repeated demands for support programs to assist beginning teachers (Ingersoll, 2012). From 1990 to 2008, the number of teacher induction programs in US have increased to more than 40% (Education Week, 2008). Teacher induction programs were created for new teachers as they adjusted to their new roles when transitioning from being a student to a professional (Blair Larsen, 1998). An effective induction program should be proactive to beginning teachers' needs and reflective of positive educational strategies. Therefore, an effective teacher induction program does not consist of a crash course or one-time orientation of how to teach students (Glazerman, et al., 2010). An effective teacher induction program supports teachers by building a community of learners and improves teacher self - efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and ultimately student achievement.

## **Support**

Support can be defined as a combination of elements put in place to help teachers succeed (Hudson, 2012). The challenge, of course, is to give novice teachers the kind of support needed if they are not only going to remain in the profession, but to develop into the kinds of educators needed to teach to today's high standards (Breux & Wong, 2003). Teacher induction programs, can aid schools and districts to meet this challenge. The Louisiana State Department of Education (Louisiana Believes, 2006) defines teacher induction program as a professional development program that incorporates mentoring and is designed to offer orientation support, and guidance for new teachers during their first couple of years of teaching. Effective teacher induction programs are designed with at least four elements: structured mentoring, common planning time and collaboration with other teachers, intensive professional development, and a cycle of observations, feedback, and reflections (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). The key component to an effective teacher induction program is successful veteran teachers

mentoring new teachers (Wood & Stanilus, 2009). The teacher induction program is an umbrella program to support teachers in adapting to a new workplace culture (Breaux & Wong, 2003). It is also considered a form of professional development that starts before the school year to give priority and support of the most immediate needs of new teachers, followed by continued support throughout their first few years of teaching (Hudson, 2012).

Currently, there are approximately 38 states require an induction program for teachers (Goldrick, 2016). Goldrick, Zabala, & Burn (2013) believed that teacher induction programs are much needed in the workforce because of the inadequate distribution of experienced and new teachers. In agreement, other researchers support the investment of creating and implementing effective teacher induction programs that aligns with the state and/ or district teacher evaluation system (Goldrick, 2007). A well-designed and implemented program can improve content knowledge, pedagogical strategies practice, and apply theoretical concepts acquired in their teacher preparation programs to the complexities of real-life teaching (Smith, Desimone, and Porter, 2012). More importantly, such programs can improve teacher retention rates by enhancing teacher efficacy, job satisfaction, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement (Van Zandt Allen, 2013). New teacher support should be looked at as a continuum, beginning with personal and emotional support and expanding to include professional support to help the newcomer develop a capacity for effectively teaching students (Breaux & Wong, 2003).

### **Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy studied in the context of teachers has been labeled teacher self-efficacy. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2007) defined teacher self-efficacy as a teacher's confidence in their ability to guide their students to success. A lack of adequate training and limited support from the administration team can lead new teachers to feel overwhelmed and ineffective (Caprara,

Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006). The demands of teaching can be frustrating. It is very easy for new educators to feel like they are drowning in paperwork, lesson planning, grading and assessing, teaching multiple courses, and the many extracurricular activities they generally take on. An effective teacher induction program can encourage self-efficacy within fresh teachers (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). Induction programs that is designed to truly understand and acknowledge the difficulties inexperienced teachers face, will guide new teachers and make them feel supported (Caprara, et al., 2006). When a new teacher is placed in an ineffective induction program or none at all, they often feel overwhelmed and can lose their sense of efficacy (Goddard, et al., 2000).

Research suggests that mentors play an important role in helping novice teachers in ways that support their growing sense of self-efficacy as professionals (Ross & Bruce, 2007). Mentee teachers observing their mentor modeling a lesson can be an important mediated experience for them to see themselves as capable of achieving the same outcome, thus being a source for building self-efficacy beliefs (Caprara, at el. 2006). This is especially true when the rookie teacher sees the model as effective, where the mentee hopes to be like the mentor teacher, and sees the model as similar to his/her teaching style (Caprara, at el. 2006). Additionally, when beginning teachers observe teachers that teach the same grade or subject would provide a more realistic model that the new teacher can identify and connect with (Goddard, et al., 2000).

### **Satisfaction**

Another element of teacher induction programs is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction can be defined as the way that people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their job (Ho & Au, 2006). Job satisfaction is any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that leads a person genuinely believe that they are indeed satisfied with their job

(Nagar, 2012). A person could be satisfied with one element of his/her job and dissatisfied with another (Ho & Au, 2006).

Research by Ouyang and Paprock (2006) reviewed a number of sources that not only connected retention and job satisfaction, but also professional development with satisfaction. They concluded that understanding the effects of job satisfaction will help with the retention problem (Ouyang & Paprock, 2006). There are a number of different elements that can lead to job satisfaction, some related to professional development and others that are not as closely connected (Nagar, 2012). The research study produced seven impactful predictors for teacher job satisfaction. The predictors were a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Ouyang & Paprock, 2006). The seven items were, salary, opportunities for advancement, professional autonomy, working conditions, interactions with colleagues, interaction with students and professional development (Ouyang & Paprock, 2006).

## **Retention**

Another major benefit of teacher induction program is increased teacher retention. Teacher induction programs have been implemented across the nation to end the high costs of teacher turnover and to help prepare and support high quality teachers (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007). Not all states require new teachers to participate in induction programs, yet trends advocate that such programs have a positive effect on beginning teachers and aid in increasing the retention rate (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). Teacher turnover is real and expensive, and statistics show that starting teachers are leaving the profession at a rate of 30% to 50% between their first and fifth years (Gray & Taie, 2015, p. 3). Not surprisingly, rates are even higher in high-poverty, high-minority public schools (Gray & Taie, 2015). Olebe (2005) claimed that teachers who do not participate in an induction programs are twice as likely to leave within

the first three years of teaching. Every year Louisiana spends approximately between \$1 million and \$1.5 million to keep pace with teacher turnover (Wong, 2003). Clearly it is not cost effective to hire brand-new teachers and put them into a sink or swim situation.

One study conducted in the Chicago Public Schools, which uses an induction model with a strong mentoring component from the New Teacher Center, a national organization focused on induction, examined the effects of induction on attrition (Synar & Maiden, 2012). Specific elements of the induction program had a higher connection to teacher retention. When comparing schools that focused on specific elements of induction, the study found that when strong mentoring is provided in conjunction with professional development, neophyte teachers were three to four times as likely to remain at their schools compared with teachers who did not participate any induction program (Kapadia & Coca, 2007). Furthermore, a beginning teacher assigned to a mentor from the same subject and common planning time had the highest rate of retention (Ingersoll, 2012). This shows that strong mentoring is a great method to induct novice teachers and could support higher retention (Inman & Marlow, 2004). This is important for policy makers and designers of teacher induction programs to consider. Providing effective professional development for starting teachers that focus on best teaching strategies in areas like classroom management, curriculum and instruction, assessments, and student intervention help increase the retention of new teachers (Olebe, 2005). In return teachers are more likely to feel supported and are more likely to stay in the profession.

### **Teacher Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of teachers and student achievement are two of the countless issues that have captured the attention of policymakers. Research clearly indicates there is a direct link between the effectiveness teachers and student achievement (Blank & de las Alas, 2009). Hence

the effectiveness of teachers has been consistently considered one the most influential factors of student achievement (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). This led to researchers to study the specific behaviors in which how highly effective teaching operates, the degree to which it drives learning, and how effectiveness evolves as teachers progress through their careers (Van Zandt Allen, 2013). Furthermore, the education system is still searching for clarity about how to develop, measure, and sustain teacher effectiveness (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). This ongoing research has also studied efforts to support accountability by defining highly effective teachers based on growth of student achievement (Van Zandt Allen, 2013).

Teacher induction programs are an influential factor to impact teacher's competency (Hudson, 2012). Teacher induction programs help inexperienced teachers become competent and effective professionals in the classroom by incorporating mentorship and is designed to offer support and guidance, which accelerates new teachers' effectiveness and increases student achievement during their first years teaching (Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers, & Sivanson, 2011). At best, induction programs help teachers integrate the newest and effective strategies into the classroom.

### **Student Achievement**

Although some researchers have claimed that there is inefficient amount of evidence showing a positive correlation between teacher induction programs and student achievement, others have found professional development as a method to improve student learning (Glazerman, 2010). One of the leading influences of student achievement is the quality of instruction; therefore, professional development that focuses on content and pedagogic knowledge is critical to improving student achievement (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). Effective teacher induction programs can accelerate the growth and success of green teachers that will

ultimately increase student achievement (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012). Studies have indicated that students taught by effective teachers perform significantly better than those assigned to ineffective teachers (Hightower et al., 2011). Today's classrooms consist of students with a wide range of educational needs. Unfortunately, many rookie teachers lack the skills needed to meet the needs of every student (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Teacher induction programs can positively impact the quality of instruction by increasing new teachers' content and pedagogical skills in order to meet the needs of all students (Desimone, 2011). Professionally-trained teachers are able to successfully assess students' strengths and weaknesses and make necessary adjustments to bridge gaps and deepen understanding (Hightower et al., 2011). Effective professional development can support teachers to improve their teaching, professional responsibilities, and ultimately improve student achievement (Lieberman, 2000). It is with this information that professionally trained teachers are able to create positive learning experiences for classrooms with students of diverse academic needs (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012). Professionally trained teachers also know of different methods to make learning more meaningful and engaging (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Obviously, these findings paint a clear picture of our knowledge about the relationship between professional development and improvements in student learning.

Quality teacher induction programs incorporates mentoring, on-site professional development, and self-reflection practices (Nasser-Abu & Fresko, 2016). In combination, Zembytska (2016) suggest these elements provide various opportunities for starting teachers to assimilate into their new professional scenery, begin to hone into their professional educator skills. The proceeding piece of this literature review elaborated on the effective strategies for implementing teacher induction programs.

## **Components of Effective Teacher Induction Programs**

A great deal of researched literature documents supportive strategies for new teachers (Hudson, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Keilwitz, 2014; Robinson, 1998; Wang, Odell, and Schwille, 2008; Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007). Minimally, such programs can improve teacher retention rates by enhancing new teacher satisfaction (Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007). Over the last three decades, many states and school districts have researched and implemented teacher induction programs as part of the professional development initiative to support beginning teachers (Hudson, 2012). Although Hudson (2012) recommends each program to focus on the major components of teacher induction, there is no one true model for implementing a teacher induction program. It is also worthy to note that an effective teacher induction program cannot be implemented with just one of the components; it must be comprehensive including all the major components that make up the whole (Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). At the very least, all teacher induction programs should consist of: mentoring from a highly effective veteran, professional development for new teachers before the school begins with supportive activities scheduled throughout the first couple of years, and time for collaboration with other educators and self-reflection (Keilwitz, 2014).

### **Mentorship**

The term “mentor” is frequently cited in regards to professional development for teachers, but also has origins in other fields of study (Stanulis & Floden, 2009). In the classical Greek poem, *The Odyssey*, the mentor was given the job of supporting and guiding the mentee (Littleton, Tally-Foos, & Wolaver, 1992). Ingersoll & Strong (2012) indicated that the term mentor is loosely described as a coach, trainer, leader, facilitator, or role model. Mentoring is defined as a formal or informal learning relationship, typically between two people where the



mentor has both experience and expertise in a specific area and provides information and resources to the mentee (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012). It is an empowering method considered by availability of an experienced educator and openness of the neophyte educator (McDonald, 1982). This method of support is conveyed through observation, ongoing discussions, questioning, and planning together in an adult learning style (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012). The influence of the experienced teacher is pervasive and continuous, while still protecting the independence of the rookie teacher (McDonald, 1982).

Throughout the academic year, mentors provide opportunities for follow-up discussions that allow the new teacher to be self-reflective after an observation (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012). Constructive feedback from the mentor can enhance mentee's teaching skills and provide guidance to mentees when handling with complex problems (Kidd et al., 2015). Mentors also provide support in learning the standards and curriculum, assist in refining teaching strategies, and help identify the needs of all students and their various learning styles (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Another task for mentors is to provide professional support such as determining appropriate professional development, providing personal support, serving as a liaison to other teachers and sharing educational resources (Keilwitz, 2014). This permits first-year teachers to be exposed to a variety of instructional practices, and allows opportunities to build a confidential and professional relationship with their mentor (Kent, Green, & Feldman, 2012).

### **Professional Development**

The best professional development is continuous, practical, collaborative, and related to and resulting from working with students and understanding their culture (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). Therefore, professional development for teachers should be looked at as an ongoing process. This is valid because learning is a lifelong progression (Ingvarson,

Meiers, & Beavis, 2005). It is on this foundation that continuous professional development is prioritized. An effective teacher induction program should begin in the early stages of a teacher's career, if not before during student teaching, and continues throughout at least the first few years of teaching (Ambrosetti, 2014). Throughout the first year of a teacher's career, the induction program should be constructed to meet the needs of beginning teachers where the district's expectations are shared through orientation, workshops, conferences, or mentoring on various aspects of teaching that are vital to student achievement (Kent, Green, and Feldman, 2012).

Professional development for starting educators usually begins with orientation. This typically occurs before the school year starts. The purpose of orientation is to provide an opportunity to answer questions, define roles and responsibilities, assess skill level and experience, set expectations, meet other colleagues, and anticipate problems that may arise the first few weeks of school. Professional development for teachers should connect the content to teacher's classrooms to build understanding, and provide opportunities for teachers to learn effective strategies by actively trying them out (Sykes, Bird, and Kennedy, 2010). Just like teachers should provide opportunities for their students to actively learn in peer-to-peer interactions, any workshop or conference can be enhanced with the implementation of learner-centered pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, Hylar, and Gardner, 2017). Therefore, when teachers are in training, majority of time should be reserved for teacher collaboration, feedback and reflection of classroom observations, analyze student work, and model new effective teaching strategies with each other (Sykes et al., 2010). There is no time wasted in having science teachers participate in the hands-on projects they are creating for their students, or in having English teachers design a platform for their students to pose Socratic Seminar questions to their peers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Most professional development occurs occasionally and covers a variety of topics during full or half work days when students are not at school (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Topics may range from student literacy, classroom management, blended learning, making student coursework rigorous, parental involvement, and student assessment. The presentation of the topics is often disconnected from each other and from the teacher's classroom. This information overload without coherence typically averts any new strategies from transferring into the teacher's instructional repertoire (Sykes et al., 2010). Professional development should go in-depth into each teacher's professional needs by prioritizing application of knowledge in instruction instead of discussing generalized topics sporadically (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Going deep does take time, but it is time that worth investing. According to Ingersoll & Merrill (2012), teachers who received at least 80 hours of professional development focused specifically on instructional strategies that led to increased student achievement were much more likely to put the new strategies into practice than teachers who received fewer hours of intense professional development.

A well-organized induction program understands the greatest needs of new teachers. It is impossible for new teachers to learn everything at once, therefore, spacing out conversations around school culture, collaborative planning, curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment across the year is practical (Blömeke, Hoth, Döhrmann, Busse, Kaiser, & Köenig, 2015). Providing novice teachers with more time to engage and process new information, they can begin to comprehend how the pieces of the whole fit together. When conversations are planned around a coinciding idea or issue, understanding deepens (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Although comprehending a curriculum's belief and background is certainly significant, teachers often express they have more immediate needs (Wynn, S. Carboni, & Patall, 2007). This may

mean instead of discussing philosophy in the beginning of the school year to jump right into practicality such as teaching and learning, content knowledge, or assessment (Blömeke et al., 2015). It is imperative to structure professional development activities that are consistent, creates opportunities for teachers to practice what they are learning, and support them in connecting the dots between all the moving parts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). After mentee teachers have developed teacher efficacy within their classrooms and school environment, they will be more mentally inclined to discuss theory (Glazerman et al., 2010). Building flexibility into the plan is also necessary. Allowing teachers to discuss what their issues are and planning sessions to address those issues as they arise is being supportive of colleagues (Wynn et al., 2007).

### **Flexibility and Time**

Gleason (2010) indicated that time is crucial so that teachers can learn, develop their skills, and problem solve to improve their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. According to Guskey and Yoon (2009), in order for induction programs to be effective it entails significant amount of time, and that time must be well organized, purposefully constructed, and focused on content, pedagogy, or both. In agreement with this, Yoon et al. (2007) stated if teachers have an average of 49 hours of professional development focused on their curriculum in a year, then student achievement would increase by 21 percentile points (p. 32). However, one of the greatest challenges of professional development is time (Odden, 2011). In order to begin having conversations that will improve student and teacher learning, it takes time and exertion to establish professional relationships based on trust.

Additionally, time is essential to form trusting relationships, which will allow the mentor to complete other mentoring duties. Bandura (1961) claimed that human behavior can be developed by observing and imitating behaviors of others. Therefore, allowing mentees time to

observe mentors modeling best pedagogical practices is an extremely beneficial feature of the induction program (Martin & Mulvihill, 2017). Furthermore, the mentor needs time to observe and evaluate the mentee's progression of teaching skills (Keilwitz, 2014). Like-minded, Kram (1985) suggested mentoring relationships thrive when both parties are willing to invest in the time to produce personal, academic, and professional growth. It is imperative for schools and districts to creatively find time for collaborative professional development (Corcoran, 1995). Time may be employed through common planning time, the use of substitute teachers, or days when only teacher report to school (Odden, 2011). Flexibility and time are essential for teacher and student growth for two reasons: first, longer activities allow for more in-depth conversations and second, more time used wisely creates opportunities for teachers to implement new strategies in their classrooms and to receive feedback on their progress (Grossman and Hirsch, 2009). The professional relationships between beginning teachers and other educators provide a personalized level of support that the other activities are unable fulfilled (Strong, 2009). With this in mind the next content will describe the responsibilities of sponsors in the teacher induction program.

### **Roles of School Leaders in Teacher Induction Programs**

It has specifically been emphasized that beginning teachers need a village of supporters to improve their teaching skills (Anderson & Bobis, 2005). For years, researchers have sought to pinpoint how school leaders can be effective in order to better supporters of beginning teachers (Strong, 2009). School leadership is receiving increased attention as a possible lever for improved instruction, recruitment and retention of effective novel teachers, and student outcomes (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010). School leaders assume a wide range of responsibilities to support beginning teachers. These roles include encouraging, observing, coaching, mentoring fresh

teachers along with collaborating, planning, and reflecting past experiences to enhance teacher's teaching skills (Stock & Duncan, 2010). Whether these duties are assigned formally or shared informally, they build the entire school's capacity to improve the quality of teaching (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017).

## **Mentors**

It is well supported in the literature that mentorship plays a crucial role in strengthening teacher development (Anderson & Bobis, 2005; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010; Saphier, Freedman, & Aschheim, 2011; Stock & Duncan, 2010; Strong, 2009). Veteran teachers may be given the task to mentor beginning teachers. The mentor's primary job is to encourage the development and growth of the new teacher (Stock & Duncan, 2010). The newly-developed mentor-mentee relationship has the potential to thrive because mentors provide non-evaluative support, collaboration, and empathy for new teachers who accept the role of mentees (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010). Beginning teachers may be assigned a mentor and receive support for up to five years (Saphier, et al., 2011). Seasoned teachers make great mentors as they may vividly remember their struggles during the early years of teaching career and desire better experiences for their mentees (Strong, 2009). After listening to and understanding their mentees' challenges, mentors may provide various types of support such as: observing, modeling, collaborating, co-teaching, and reflecting to pass on pedagogical knowledge and develop a meaningful relationship based on trust that enables the pair to learn from each other (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010). Overall, mentors provide continuous hands-on professional development to instill effective strategies learned from years of practice into their mentee (Strong, 2009).

Observations are an important part of professional development for teachers, especially in the beginning of their career (Stock & Duncan, 2010). During an observation the mentor

observes their mentee to document specific behaviors (Stock & Duncan, 2010). The observations not only allow the mentor to discover an area of practice that the new teacher excel at but should strengthen (Anderson & Bobis, 2005). Once both teachers discuss and agree on what area the new teacher should improve in, the veteran teacher plans to model the desired behavior in a classroom setting (Anderson & Bobis, 2005). It is not uncommon for new teachers to have never observed exemplary teaching (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). The mentee observes their mentor modeling a specific technique or strategy that they wish to implement in their own classroom (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). For example, the mentor could model checking for understanding every five-seven minutes, introducing the day's learning target, circulating through the classroom, or a structure for collaborative group work (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2017). After the mentor models a strategy, the two teachers plan to co-teach and implement the strategy together in the classroom (Strong, 2009). Through this method, the teachers share the responsibility for planning, instructing, and assessing in a manner that involves the mentor guiding their mentee as the new teacher practice the new strategy (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013).

During the mentoring cycle, the mentor then observes the mentee implement the new strategy to determine if teacher improved in that specific area of practice (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). Together, the mentor and their mentee collaborate to make improvements in the same strategy practiced or a new one (Richter, Kunter, Lüdtke, Klusmann, Anders, & Baumert, 2013). Through the mentoring relationship effective mentors are accessible, great listeners, understanding, brainstorm strategies with mentees to implement, and document successes and challenges during weekly meetings (Richter, et al., 2013). Mentors and mentees benefit from the mentoring process, when their make time to reflect on their practice (Orland-Barak & Hasin,

2010). Reflection allows mentors and mentees to think about the rationale for decisions and develop strategies to improve practice (Richter, et al., 2013). Hence, the role of mentors encourages novel teachers to have the confidence, adopt problem solving techniques in the classroom, and practice effective teaching strategies. The challenge, however, occurs when conceptualizing and operationalizing mentoring relationships. Given that mentor-mentee relationships must be overseen for compatibility, the succeeding section discussed the significance of the role of induction program coordinators.

### **Program Coordinators**

The teacher induction program coordinator is the first point of contact for the teacher induction program on his/her campus (Strong, 2009). The primary goal of the coordinator is to effectively provide ongoing support to beginning teachers and manage the interactions of all stakeholders charged with the support and development of beginning teachers on his/ her campus (Strong, 2009). To accomplish this multifaceted goal, the coordinator must develop and implement a comprehensive induction program that promotes teacher development (Dzickowski, 2013).

Pairing veteran teachers with novice teachers for mentorship is the cornerstone of the coordinator's job (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). This task includes monitoring the compatibility between the two teachers to ensure both parties are mutually satisfied and growing professionally (Dzickowski, 2013). When mentoring becomes dysfunctional, it is up to the coordinator to intervene and provide alternate mentoring pairs (Dzickowski, 2013). The coordinator also plans and implements orientation and training that clearly communicates resources, expectations, and support for beginning teachers (Jones, Youngs, and Frank, 2013). Additionally, the coordinator delivers regular, ongoing professional development focused on



helping mentors and mentee teachers grow and develop (Dziczkowski, 2013). Throughout the school year the coordinator evaluates the program's effectiveness to ensure fidelity with program expectations and requirements, as well as, identify and overcome any obstacles to success (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). Induction program coordinators often keep records of induction program progress.

Finally, the coordinator meets regularly with all stakeholders to report data on inexperienced teacher's classroom performance and how it has impacted student achievement (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). Coordinators ensure that mentees are getting the best possible assistance by collaborating with other school leaders. Likewise, coordinators should partner with administrators to ensure that teachers in training experience are positive, which may increase the likelihood that qualified teachers will remain in the field of education. Also, coordinators and administrators collaborate to prepare for the influx of brand-new teachers (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). These preparation meetings are focused on identifying neophyte teachers on campus, providing incentives and training for potential mentors, and finding professional development resources based on the needs of the mentee and mentor (Keilwitz, 2014). For this reason, the responsibility of administrators in teacher induction programs was reviewed in the ensuing literature.

### **Administrators**

The primary role of administrators is to ensure teachers work together, receive the proper amount of support, and achieve school-wide goals (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2010). Not surprisingly, beginning teachers require differentiated support from administrators to remain committed to their assignment (Leko & Smith, 2010). According to Correa & Wagner (2011), if administrators fail to provide meaningful support, then rookie teachers may turn to peers for

guidance. However, if colleagues also fail to provide adequate support, beginning teachers may leave the profession prematurely (Jones, Youngs, & Frank, 2013). In a national study, 80% of beginning teachers stated they chose to stay in education until retirement at schools with a supportive learning environment (Correa & Wagner, 2011, p. 18). This discovery proposes that teacher retention may be influenced by administrators who are supportive, share resources, and focus on teacher development and student outcomes (Gimbel, Lopes, & Greer, 2011).

Administrators work closely with all stakeholders such as district leaders, induction program coordinators, and mentors involved in the teacher induction program to ensure that new teachers are provided sufficient amount of support (Hallinger & Heck, 2011).

Administrators also may arrange for training throughout the progression of the school's teacher induction program or mentoring program (Brown & Wynn, 2007). As instructional leaders, administrators should make sure that new teachers have sufficient time to interact with other teachers and provide professional development that impact student achievement (Whitaker, 2003). Administrators with a high degree of emotional intelligence will evaluate the workload of beginning teachers to ensure that the teacher can focus on mastering the art of teaching (Nir, Adam, Kranot, & Nati, 2006). Additionally, administrators may take part in assigning mentors to mentee teachers and arrange for both teachers to teach the same grade level and/ or content area (Gimbel, Lopes, & Greer, 2011). It is very important for administrators to show empathy which indicates that they truly care about the success and emotional wellbeing of inexperienced teachers (Whitaker, 2003). Overall, administrators play a strategic role in support of new teachers.

### **Summary**

Chapter Two synthesized the literature on the training and development of beginning teacher. The problems of first year teachers range from classroom management to managing the

instruction of the diverse learning needs of students. In order to remedy these challenges, school systems have introduced a range of programs and as a result, a rapid increase of teacher induction programs has occurred. Generally, any support given to new teachers may result in improved morale, competent teaching, increased retention, and a better learning environment for students. Teacher induction is an extension of effective professional development, defined as a set of activities that provide continuous hands-on support and on-the-job training to new teachers to increase student achievement by improving teaching practices of new teachers (Robinson, 1998). To encourage and support starting teachers, some states adopted laws that require school districts to provide support such as teacher induction programs, which requires the district and local schools to invest time and money to build a community of future educators.

In Chapter Three, I described the methodology for this single case study. Specifically, the design, research questions, setting, participants, and instrument will be discussed. Additionally, I described the data collection and analysis procedures, researcher's role, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

## **CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of Chapter Three was to describe the methodology utilized to investigate the experiences of educators participating in the teacher induction program and the impact of the program on beginning teacher's development in a large Louisiana school district. First, this section presented the overall research design, the rationale, and facts needed to understand how the research goals will be addressed and how the questions will be answered. Second, details on how the setting and participants were selected is described. Third, the instrument used to gather information about the study was revealed. Fourth, specific details about the data collection were outlined. Fifth, a detailed description of the data analysis procedure was discussed, Sixth, researcher's role in the study was recognized. Seventh, an overview of how trustworthiness was listed. Finally, participant's consent and ethical considerations were explained.

### **Research Design**

In the present study, I elected to implement a single case study research design, a qualitative research method; therefore, understanding the purpose and features of qualitative research was vital to comprehending the single case study design (Creswell, 2018). According Doyle, Brady, & Byrne (2009), qualitative method design is used for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups assign to a social problem. When conducting a qualitative study, researchers are often answering the questions of "how" or "why" in a particular context/environment instead of attempting to generalize effects to other populations (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, because qualitative researchers typically spend a lot time in the participating environment, they often gain a better sense of both the participants and the context of what they are studying (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, this participation allows qualitative researchers to be a voice to their participant's lived experience (Yin, 2009). Crotty (1998) stated regarding this

research method, “Meaning is not discovered, but constructed. In this understanding of knowledge, it is clear that different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon (p. 67).” In the context of this study, I investigated the impact of induction programs for new teachers. Even though each participant had a role in the same teacher induction program, each participant’s experience within the program was different.

Similar to other forms of qualitative research, a case study seeks for meaning and understanding of social realities (Yin, 2009). Creswell (2018) provided the most sufficient definition that describes a case study, “case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case-based themes.” A case study is generally favored when participant’s behavior and experience cannot be manipulated (Creswell, 2018). Yin (2009) also detailed that case studies can explore questions or hypotheses, describe a phenomenon, and explain reasons why something is happening. When conducting a case study, Stake (2006) recommended that four-10 cases be studied, as 2 to 3 cases do not provide enough interactivity between the participants’ experiences to lead to comparisons. However, implementing a multiple case study can be time consuming (Stake, 2006). Due to time constraints and COVID-19 health restrictions, this research implemented a single case study. The instrumental case study research design was found to be the most appropriate method to explain the detailed operations of a unique teacher induction program linked to the impact of beginning teachers (Yin, 2009). This case study addressed three research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of beginning teachers about the teacher induction program?

2. How do mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators support beginning teachers?
3. How does the teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers?

## **Setting**

The school district selected is located in one of the most populous parishes in the state of Louisiana. It has the highest high school graduation rate, at 82.2%, with 95% of the teachers being state certified (Louisiana Believes, 2019). There are over 40,000 students being served by approximately 2,000 teachers in 85 schools (Louisiana Believes, 2019). Although the overall performance score declined in the mid-2010s, the school district remains a C district, causing the district to go from 44<sup>th</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> in the state (Louisiana Alliance, 2014). This was the result of failing to earn progress points the state gives to schools that substantially increase the number of students performing below grade level to at or above grade level (Louisiana Alliance, 2014).

## **Participants**

Given the purpose of the study and the nature of the research questions, I utilized nonprobability sampling, a method of selecting participants that does not use random sampling (Creswell, 2018). Thus, nonprobability sampling, which does not depend on randomization, is the most common sampling method in qualitative research since generalization in a statistical manner is not the goal (Merriam, 2009). Due to the fact that I sought to understand the impact of teacher induction programs, nonprobability sampling was the most logical sampling method to select participants. Explicitly, as the researcher, I also engaged in what Patton (2002) mentions as purposeful-criterion sampling strategy, which is sampling “based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample

from which the most can be learned” (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). According to Merriam (2009) when using purposeful sampling, the researcher must first determine the selection criteria to identify potential participants associated to the purpose of the study that will serve as a guide to identify valuable information.

I began my search for study participants within the state of Louisiana. This geographic area was chosen because it was convenient for me to gather necessary information for the study site. Thus, convenience sampling was also employed as per Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao (2007). Convenience is also appropriate as target participants are teaching in a parish-wide (county) public school system in the vicinity of the university setting. According to Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Jiao (2007), researchers can make use of a multitude of purposive sampling schemes. For this study, I specifically targeted an accessible school that implemented a teacher induction program. This baseline criteria were chosen because it allowed access to educators who have a role in the program. Some participants were educators in the selected school district who have taught before, understood the challenges of new teachers, and participated in the implementation of teacher induction program which includes administrators, induction program coordinators, and mentors. Additionally, I selected three beginning high school teachers based on the following criteria: (a) possess less than five years of teaching experience, (b) are currently participating in an induction program, and (c) teaches full time in the Community Parish School System (a pseudonym). Study participants also consisted of three mentors, the induction program coordinator, and one administrator from one school in the studied school district. Thus, I utilized nonprobability and criterion, and sampling strategies to select participants

## **Instrumentation**

After Louisiana State University's Institutional Review Board granted permission and after receipt of written approval from the school administration, the researcher collected data from multiple sources within a single school. Data collected from multiple sources provided a profound understanding of the phenomenon and enhanced the trustworthiness and credibility of the case study. Creswell (2013) referred to multiple sources as triangulation, which is the implementation of different sources to valid the evidence in order to ensure the accuracy of the study. To achieve triangulation, the researcher gathered data from interviews, a reflective notebook, and site artifacts and documents. Figure 3 illustrates the sources used to develop an in-depth understanding of induction at a single school in Louisiana. The obtained sources were examined to answer all of the research questions.

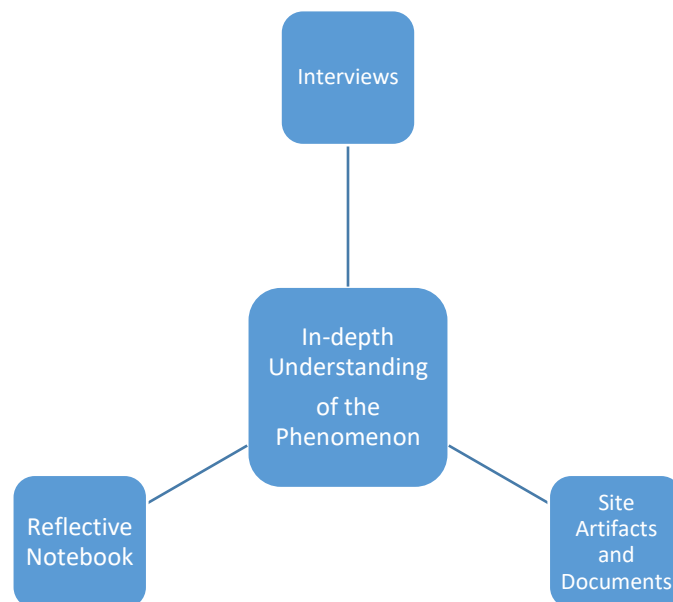


Figure 3. Triangulation of Data

**Interviews.** The primary data source for this study was interview data. Interviews allow case study researchers to create a story of participants' responses which honors participants' meaning-making processes (Creswell, 2018). Seidman (1991) supported this perception,



asserting, “I interview because I am interested in other people’s stories. Telling stories is essentially a meaning-making process. When people tell stories, they select details of their experience from their stream of consciousness (p. 10).” Based on the scope of this study, which focused on constructing meaning, I selected interviewing for the purpose of obtaining information about the impact of teacher induction programs. The interview is often regarded as a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee, where the interviewer asks questions and the interviewee answers accordingly (Esterberg, 2002). The intent of interviewing is to discover what is in and on the interviewee’s mind (Creswell, 2018). Data collected from interviews allows the researcher to ask open ended questions about what the researcher did not observe and to understand the perspective of the participants (Doyle et al., 2009). The purpose for open ended questions is to make the interviews conversational and seemingly more accessible.

Constructivist research often use naturalistic research methods, such as personal interviews and observations, in which findings are co-created by both the researcher and participant (Angen, 2000). In order to effectively conduct an interview, a combination of rapport and trust must be established (Esterberg, 2002). To establish the trust and rapport necessary for the conversation, I shared information about myself with the participants, reminding them I had also been a beginning teacher at the onset of my career. This allowed me to put participants at ease by providing personal experiences related to the topic being studied. Additionally, in an effort to build rapport and earn trust, my goal was to conduct all research interviews face-to-face. In person interactions allows both the interviewer and interviewee to read and respond to each other’s body language, which cannot be occur through paper questionnaires or phone interviews (Esterberg, 2002). Face-to-face conversations enhances the dialog because listeners become co-narrators through verbal and non-verbal replies, which can lead to great storytelling (Bavelas,

Coates, & Johnson, 2000). Although face-to-face interviews were preferred, due to COVID-19 all interviews were conducted via Zoom, an online platform of video and audio conferencing. Also, when establishing trust and rapport, active listening and nonjudgmental behavior are two of the key practices that should be prioritized when interviewing for single case study research (Bavelas, Coates, & Johnson, 2000).

There are six types of questions (Merriam, 2009) which were employed during the interview process for this case study research: (a) experience/behavior, (b) opinion/belief, (c) feeling, (d) knowledge, (d) sensory, and (e) background/demographic. Interviews with beginning teachers addressed research questions one and three. Likewise, interviews with the mentors, the induction program coordinator, and an administrator provided insight into research questions two and three. Eight participants participated in a one-on-one interview in one setting within a one-month time frame in the summer of 2020. Interview questions one through five were asked to obtain demographic information from each participant (see Appendices E-H).

To gain a better perspective on the impact of induction programs on high school beginning teachers, interview questions twelve through sixteen addressed these concerns (see Appendix E). Participating in teacher induction programs influences novice teacher's perception of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement. If implemented effectively, induction programs may determine whether beginning feel supported (Glazerman, et al., 2010). To understand the type of support that new teachers require of peers, school administrators, and the induction program, interview questions five and nine through eleven addressed these concerns (see Appendix E). Research suggests that mentee teachers expect quality induction programs to provide them with mentors within the same certification and school, common planning time, reduced workload, time for observations and reflections, on-

the-job and on-going professional development, and opportunities to network with other teachers (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Overall, rookie teachers want to be a part of an organization that is encouraging, compassionate, and understanding.

To understand the support of mentors on beginning teachers, interview questions six through ten were developed (see Appendix F). A well-trained mentor provides emotional support, reduce isolation, and motivate mentees to implement effective pedagogical strategies (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010). To provide insight on the role that mentors have on how teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers interview question eleven and twelve were asked (see Appendix F). Wang et al. (2008) argued that mentors were perceived as effective if they are able to influence neophyte teachers to implement content-specific pedagogy aligned with national curriculum standards. Overall, mentoring is successful in a collaborative school environment that supports green teachers.

To appreciate the methods that coordinators use to support beginning teachers, interview questions six through ten were proposed (see Appendix G). A coordinator “builds relationships with mentors and mentees and provides mentors with professional development” (Smith & Israel, 2010, p. 38). To understand the role that coordinators have on how teacher induction program impact professional development for starting teachers interview question eleven and twelve were asked (see Appendix G). Their support is vital to the success of an induction program for inexperienced teachers. Overall, coordinators act as a liaison between district leaders, administrators, mentors, and new teachers.

To provide insight to on how principals support beginning teachers, interview questions six through ten were proposed (see Appendix H). Research suggests that 50% of beginning teachers leave within the first five years due to lack of support and job dissatisfaction (O'Connor,

Malow, & Bisland, 2011, p. 222). This statistic suggest that school administrators pays an important role in ensuring that novice teachers feel supported in order to reduce turnover. To gain a better perspective of the role that administrators have on how teacher induction program impact professional development for mentee teachers interview question eleven and twelve were asked (see Appendix H). Fantilli & McDougall (2009) argued that principals supported green teachers by arranging for mentoring, differentiating support, and reduced workload. Overall, principals set the tone for support for the induction program coordinators, mentors, and rookie teachers.

**Site Artifacts and Documents.** As a secondary data sources, used to triangulate interview data, I also reviewed district and school-level documents and artifacts pertaining to induction. The site documentation provided insightful details that would otherwise be unknown to the researcher (Patton, 2002). As questions arose from the interviews, the researcher asked the administrators, site coordinator, mentors, and beginning teachers to provide additional documents. Documents were obtained to clarify or authenticate the participants' statements. Creswell (2018) posited that site documents provide objective evidence about the phenomenon and are another source that increases the study's trustworthiness and creditability. To determine which documents would be appropriate for this dissertation, I utilized the criteria set forth by Merriam (2009). She stated that researchers should choose document that contain information or insights relevant to the research questions. Therefore, I made every effort to collect as many useful and appropriate documents as possible to further my understanding of the study and triangulate my findings. These artifacts included: e-mail correspondences, professional development documentation, and the district's induction program handbook. In essence, I was

gathering documents that was available through public record or was provided by the educators during their participation in the induction program.

**Researcher's Reflective Notebook.** As a third data source, I also maintained an electronic notebook. The purpose of a reflective notebook was to record my thoughts, issues, responses to interviews, and other pertinent information as I envisioned the study, while conducting the study, and post data collection. During the interviews, I actively took notes, sometimes about connections to the literature reviewed, oftentimes about my reflections as a beginning teacher, but also noted what interviewees were expressing. While highly personal and admittedly subjective, the notebook also reflected my thoughts about the study and the issue of induction. Due to the study being conducted in a qualitative case study design, the reflective notebook became a benchmark for the trustworthiness and creditability of the study (Morrow, 2005). According to Morrow and Smith (2000), the use of a reflective notebook adds rigor to qualitative inquiry as I was able to highlight my reactions, assumptions, expectations, and biases about the research process. Therefore, acknowledging my personal thoughts and interpretations of the data in the reflective notebook aided me within the research process and helped prevent bias from affecting the results (Stake, 2006).

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Prior to collecting and data or contacting potential participants, I received approval from Louisiana State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix B). As an initial step, I searched for high schools in the district that was implementing Louisiana's teacher induction program. From the list of schools that fit the criteria, my next step was to email the principals at each research site for permission to interview themselves and their faculty members that meet the criteria (see Appendix C). I choose the first and only school that responded with

approval to conduct the study. As an ethical disclosure, the school that was selected is also the school where I am employed. My collegial relationships with faculty and administration may have convinced them to participate. My initial intention was to try to gain entrée to at least two sites, one a lower-ranking school and one, a higher-ranking school. I followed up with over 20 emails and calls. However, as I was attempting to reach schools in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and given that Louisiana schools were ordered closed in mid-March, 2020, my emails and calls went unanswered. This was disappointing to me as a researcher, but clearly beyond my control. Thus, in consultation with my advisor, I reached out to my committee, requesting to switch my design from a multiple case study to a single case study, fully understanding the fragility of such a choice as if participants decided to discontinue, I would be forced to reconsider my entire study.

The school administrator gave permission first, so I was cleared to reach out to teachers and other faculty. Once I received the approval from the school, I then sent an email to the teacher induction coordinator of the school and requested a list of potential beginning teachers with five or fewer years of experience and their assigned mentors. An invitation email, accompanied by the criterion survey, and informed consent form, which highlighted the participant's required characteristics and also explained the participant's right to refuse to participate or withdraw at any time during the study, was sent to potential participants. Again, I selected the first three beginning teachers and the first three mentors that met the selection parameters and agreed to participate in the study.

After the potential participants responded to the invitation email and agreed to participate in the study, I conducted a five-minute initial interview via telephone with each potential participant to ensure that the participants understood the research procedure and their right to

refuse to participate or withdraw at any time during the study, thus, informed consent was obtained verbally. I also explained the overview of the study as per IRB regulations, verified participants' qualifications to be included in the study, clarified the interview process, obtained the actual consent form electronically and gained permission to video record the interview, verified that the candidate did not have difficulties articulating his or her experiences, and set interview dates.

My intent, face-to-face interviews in a mutually convenient location, would have been ideal, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions all interviews were conducted via the Zoom® platform. Zoom was the next best choice because it allowed me to safely video/audio record the interviews and save the file directly on my laptop. Additionally, I used the Zoom video/ audio recordings feature because it captured the “actual details” of the interview (Sacks & Jefferson, 1992). Sacks & Jefferson (1992) have argued that no interviewer can recall verbatim the actual words, much less the non-verbal exchanges used in the conversations. Also, Sacks & Jefferson (1992) believed video/audio recordings enhance the strength of research because the researcher can replay the actual words of the conversation. As a novice researcher, while I took notes during the interview, I found the claims of Sacks & Jefferson (1992) to resonate. This approach was also convenient for both the participants and myself because it allowed us to participate in the interview in the comfort of our homes. Each interview was one-on-one and lasted approximately 30-minute; some exceeded this time frame; others were a bit shorter.

Before conducting the interview, I began by reminding each participant about the purpose of the study and consent to record the interview. I also reminded each participant that he or she could make a request to stop the interview at any time without any penalty. During the interviews, I recorded notes in an electronic notebook about my observations and interpretation

of the stories told. The researcher's reflective notebook maintained a record of the participant's profile and prevent distortion of information, which could occur if I relied only on my memory (Riessman, 2008). Once the interviews were completed, I informed each participant I would make the completed interview transcript and findings available to them as per Patton's member checking procedure (Patton, 2002). A thank-you email was sent to the participants immediately after the interview. I transcribed interviews within 48 hours of each interview using Rev software, an online video/audio transcription service. This data software was utilized to assist me in ensuring that the interviews are transcribed thoroughly; transcribing immediately after each interview allowed me to consider transcript responses in a timely manner. Within two days after the interview, the researcher emailed the transcripts to the participants to give them an opportunity to check the accuracy of the content. Once the participants gave their approval of the transcribed interviews, I was then able to analyze the data to obtain further documentation.

Based on the responses of the participants in the interviews, I asked them for additional artifacts and documents to corroborate their experiences. I sent a text message asking them to call me at their earliest convenience about the research study. Once the participants called me, I was able to ask for email related the induction program, meeting agendas. In addition, I was able to obtain the district's induction program handbook online through a Google search. I emailed the site coordinator to confirm if the document was accurate and used on campus. Once the coordinator confirmed the handbook, I was able to synchronously examine the interviews and all of the documents obtained from the participants to support the findings of the single case study.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

Stake (1995) explains, data analysis "essentially means taking something apart (p. 71)." Hence, it is the method of understanding the ways researchers use and make sense of data, and



also identifying and defining the patterns that emerged from the interpretation process (Stake, 1995). From this guideline, I grouped data from different educators' responses from the interview questions, the documents obtained from the participants, and my reflective notebook in order to sort, code, categorize, assign themes, and analyze their different perspectives on the impression of Louisiana's induction programs on teacher development.

First, as I collected the transcribed interviews, site documents, and digital notebook I entered them into the Atlas.ti software program to analyze the data. This software was utilized because of the visual representation feature for qualitative data analysis, in which the tool searched for and highlighted patterns (Segal, 2004). Second, I began the analysis process by reviewing the documents I had collected following each participant's interview. I reviewed each document within 24 hours of collection in an attempt limit undue influence regarding my understanding of my participants' responses. Third, after I reviewed each document a few times, I recorded notes detailing my thoughts and responses that seemed most beneficial to my research questions. Reviewing the documents thoroughly allowed me to break the data into small units such that meaningful information could stand alone (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Third, each unit of information was coded and then sorted into open codes using the constant comparative technique (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). With each additional unit of information, I determined if the unit fit into an established open code or if it contained meaning not in any open code (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). If the latter occurs, then the unit of information became a new code (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Fourth, each code was reviewed to make certain that all units of information belonged to a code category (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). During this stage, I reviewed the documents again until a hierarchy of themes emerged to me. Finally, all categories were clustered and given a theme title (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This process allowed me to develop

my own theory about the impact of induction programs on training beginning teachers.

Additionally, my resulting data analyses was subsequently utilized to enlighten my interpretation of the interviews as well as site documents and my reflective notebook in an effort to effectively triangulate my findings.

As previously stated, the graphical networking feature on Atlas.ti allowed the creation of a visual representation of themes to guide my interpretation of the data. Creswell (2018) acknowledges that a researcher's own experience is just as valuable in interpreting the data as a researcher's trustworthiness to a theoretical lens. During my own interpretation process, my experience as a new teacher informed my understanding of the participants' stories. Furthermore, to express the participants' perceptions of their experiences accurately, I focused specifically on what they were saying, the conclusions they drew, and their intentions for future participation of the induction program. The themes that emerged from this study came directly from my awareness of the healthy conflict between my own biases and the participant's own interpretation.

### **Trustworthiness**

Being able to trust the research results of this study is especially important since practitioners and policymakers in the field of education utilized such findings to intervene in teacher development to produce positive student achievement outcomes by implementing effective pedagogical practices. It was my aim to therefore present insights and conclusions that were trustworthy. According to (Amankwaa, 2016), researchers should establish the protocols and procedures necessary for a study to be considered worthy of consideration by readers. Additionally, Creswell (2018) encouraged researchers to follow their detailed research plan so that findings would be credible, transferable, confirmable, and dependable.

Credibility is the how the researcher proves that the findings are true and accurate (Creswell, 2018). Credibility was achieved through member checking, which builds trust between the researcher and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Member checks occurred when I asked participants to review the data collected from the interviews and my interpretations of the data. Trust is an important element of the member check process. Participants usually appreciate the member check method because it gives them an opportunity to verify their statements and fill in any gaps from the interviews (Shenton, 2004).

Transferability is how the researcher demonstrates that the research study's findings are applicable to similar populations (Creswell, 2018). To achieve transferability, I asked the participants to describe their experiences in detail and then, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Participants' detailed experiences resulted in a "thick descriptive narrative," which increased the possibility that this study's findings could be true for other situations (Lincoln and Guba, 1986, p. 19).

Confirmability refers to how the findings are based on participants' responses and not any potential bias or personal motivations of the researcher (Creswell, 2018). I achieved confirmability through use of direct quotes and member checking. Furthermore, I maintained an audit trail, which records and justifies every step of the data analysis process. This process demonstrates that the research study's findings are an accurate representation of the participants' responses (Shenton, 2004).

Dependability means that if the study could be repeated by other researchers and that the findings would be consistent (Creswell, 2018). To achieve dependability, I maintained a research journal with daily experiences, research activities, and contact information and asked an external auditor to evaluate the findings and confirm the interpretation and results. The use of a research

journal and external audit ensured that the content and context were accurately represented and so that future researchers could replicate the study (Shenton, 2004).

### **Researcher's Role**

Currently, I am pursuing a doctorate in P-12 Educational Leadership and have earned an Education Specialist degree and Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from Louisiana State University A&M, Baton Rouge, LA. My journey in the education system started in 2015, after the completion of my Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Spelman College, Atlanta, GA. I completed an intensive 8-weeks alternative certification program to prepare me to teach high schoolers mathematics. I have been teaching in Louisiana for five years. Additionally, I assist the teacher induction program coordinator at my school site with matching mentors and mentees, providing training for mentors, implementing professional development activities for beginning teachers, and being a liaison of support and resources for mentors and mentees. As a once beginning teacher, I am invested and passionate about how new teachers are supported. Retaining teachers should be a concern of all educators. Upon the completion of my doctoral degree, I intend to continue teaching high school mathematics, provide support in the teacher induction program, and become an instructional specialist. My experience as a teacher has allowed me to have a better understanding of what it means to be a beginning teacher and the impact of teacher induction programs on a beginning teacher. All of these experiences motivated me to investigate the impact of Louisiana's teacher induction programs on beginning teachers.

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is significant, as he or she collects data and analyze the data (Creswell, 2018). Thus, my role in this study was an observer-as-participant (Musante & DeWalt, 2010), and a moderate participant as per Spradley (2016) since I was the primary instrument of data collection through interviewing participants and

data analysis by transcribing the data collected and coding the data to uncover the emerging themes. As a moderate participant (Spradley, 2016) and as previously mentioned, I am also an employee of the school site where research was conducted. I work with colleagues daily. Hence, there may be impending bias in my role, which could potentially impact the findings of the study, making this a very difficult task of being objective and nonjudgmental in my thoughts, observations, and actions. The potential bias could stem from my own personal experience as a beginning teacher and participating in Louisiana's teacher induction program and my status as a teacher at the school site.

Nonetheless, this insight could also have assisted me in my data collection, data analysis, and the understanding of the phenomena being studied, such that it is something that needs to be truly experienced before having the capacity to clearly write about it. That is why the use of a personal reflective journal to document my own thinking and feelings through the entire process, which was consumed to further document the relationship I had with the data was imperative in analyzing, interpreting, and reporting the data. Additionally, the use of member checking also aided in controlling my bias.

### **Consent and Ethical Considerations**

Each participant was asked to give verbal and written consent following an explanation of the purpose of the study and the procedures of the interview (see Appendix D). The explanation reiterated the voluntary nature of the study and the fact that they could choose to opt out of the study at any point. The explanation of consent also stated the confidentiality of the results. This research study protected the participants in every way possible. All information will be strictly confidential. The name of the school district, the name of participants' school, and participants' name will NOT be associated with any responses. The anonymity of all persons

involved will be preserved by providing pseudonyms. The information will be store on my home laptop which as a password on it. The researcher has completed the required training in human subjects' procedures as prescribed by the IRB (see Appendix B). The certificates were obtained by completing course work at the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) at the Louisiana State University using on-line educational modules.

### **Summary**

Chapter Three described the methodology for this qualitative study. A single case study was appropriate because it allowed me to interview and interpret the experiences of multiple participants. Following LSU IRB guidelines, eight educators from one school were identified by the school's administrators and myself as great candidates for this study. The interview questions were reviewed by experts in the field to endorse that the questions would produce data that address the research questions. The use of video/audio-recording and coding technology assisted in reducing ethical concerns regarding researcher bias. All data were kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms as well as kept secured on a password locked laptop.

In Chapter Four, I will provide a detailed account of the findings to understand the experiences of ten educators participating in a teacher induction program. The chapter will conclude with the essence of the phenomenon.

## **CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of Chapter Four was to present the findings grounded on rigorous data collection and analysis. In addition, the findings painted a picture of the standpoints of educators participating in the teacher induction program in this select Louisiana school, and findings examined the impact of the induction program on teacher development. First, to accomplish this task, an introduction to each participant is provided. Second, codes and themes were constructed from a synthesized analysis of participants' perspectives, document analysis, and utilizing comments from the researcher's reflective notebook. Lastly, the three research questions were answered in detail, based on participants' significant statements.

### **Participant's Profile**

Participants were selected using a purposeful-criterion sampling strategy. All participants are high school educators in Community Parish School System (a pseudonym). Based on the set criteria the educators have the following characteristics in common: a beginning teacher that (a) possess less than five years of teaching experience, (b) are currently participating in an induction program, and (c) teaches full time; or a mentor, teacher induction program coordinator, or administrator who provides support to beginning teachers participating in the teacher induction program. Participants were assigned pseudonyms in alphabetical order from A – Z.

### **Beginning Teachers**

**Arianna.** Arianna is an African American female in her late twenties. She earned her bachelor's degree in engineering and is a robotics and computer science teacher. She has taught for two years. Arianna assimilated easily into the school's culture because she knew she had the support of her administrators and peers. Nevertheless, as a beginning teacher she was surprised

that many veteran teachers had some of the same questions as she did but did not seek for additional help. Arianna described her experience this way:

Like if I had an issue and nobody had an answer, I knew this is not somebody's first concern. And it's sad to say, but I had a lot of teachers who have been teaching for five to seven years that was saying, Oh, I went through the same thing when I was a first-year teacher, but I just had to figure it out. I don't think it's fair that as new teachers, we should have to figure it out. We should have something there to give us the information and knowledge that we need. You know, it shouldn't be just a figuring out situation (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

**Brenton.** Brenton is an African American male in his mid-thirties. He completed his bachelor's degree in kinesiology and is a health and physical education teacher. He has three years of experience as a teacher. Brenton went into the education professional expecting the unexpected. He understood that it is a profession that you must experience to truly understand and is not a profession for everyone. Although he has experienced quite a few challenges as a beginning teacher, he believes that being an educator is a calling that he needed to answer.

Brenton stated his perspective this way:

I expected to have challenging students. Um, I expected to have issues unknownst to me. Um, but you have to do it to get full exposure and full understanding of how big a deal it is for you to be a teacher. I don't think anything that I've seen or experienced thus far as surprising, so to speak because I came in very thoughtful about the situation and very thoughtful about the decision, I was making about my profession. However, I realized that school didn't prepare me for it and that's really, um eye-awakening, I kind of learned from my more senior teachers and tried to, um, navigate the educational system that way, it takes some getting used to (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

**Christiana.** Christiana is a White female in her late thirties. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology and teaches social studies. She has taught for half a school year and is looking forward to teaching a full year in the upcoming school year. At times she felt like she was drowning with all the responsibilities that came with being a teacher. However, the induction program gave her a space to receive support and advice on challenges she faced as a new teacher.



This support system allowed her to feel comfortable to return the following school year.

Christiana viewed her first-year teaching experience this way:

To be honest, most days I feel like a failure. Uh, I mean, it's been an amazing experience, but it's very hard and it's very draining, and I don't have the same experience as everyone else. Like if you majored in education or you, um, teach under somebody for a year, or you student teach, then it's different, you know, I decided I was going to do this program in February and then in July, people started calling me for jobs. I didn't think I was going to get into the school year, this year. So, it came up rather suddenly. And so, a lot of times I felt like I was like just above water (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

## **Mentors**

**Devin.** Gerald is an African American male in his late forties. He earned his master's in administration and supervision and is a social studies teacher. He has been in the education system for over twenty years and has been a mentor for about fifteen years. He stated that his first-year as a teacher was very challenging, to the point that he wanted to quit. However, the following year he was given a mentor that changed his outlook of teaching. Grateful for the support he received as a beginning teacher, Gerald always wanted to be a mentor and recalled his own experience as a beginning teacher:

It was difficult as a beginning teacher. I actually wanted to give up, I didn't want to go back my second year. I decided to go back and I was assigned a mentor and my mentor name was Sarah. And through dealing with the mentor-mentee program, she worked with me, gave me motivation, constantly checked on me. I went back in for 20 years afterwards and it has been getting better and better (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

**Elizabeth.** Elizabeth is an African American female in her early thirties. She recently earned her master's in educational leadership and is a former social studies teacher and the magnet coordinator on her campus. She has been an educator for about ten years and has been mentoring other teachers for approximately five years. Although there was an induction program for new teachers when Elizabeth started teaching, she was not invited to participate. She believed

that as a beginning teacher she slipped through the cracks and was not given the opportunity to be mentored. She claimed through the help of informal mentoring and teaching herself she eventually became the teacher she knew she could be. Yet, she felt that trial and error could have been avoided if she was not overlooked. Elizabeth summed up her experience in the following manner:

Well mentoring means lot, because I didn't have one and I definitely could have used one, although I kind of, you know, just latched on to people to help me, but to actually have one that was responsible for helping me maneuver through the classroom and just different things like that would have been great and I want to be there for somebody because I did not have that. And I know it's very difficult because I can remember times staying up to like two or three o'clock in the morning and try to figure out what I'm going to do for the next day after I spent the whole day planning and everything, but I knew it was easier routes to get to where I was going, but, you know, um, I didn't have that leadership and I didn't have that mentorship to help me through. So, um, being a mentor teacher, I will help anybody on that campus, as many people as I can. Um, I will overextend myself to help a new teacher (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

**Faith.** Faith is African American female in her mid-sixties. She earned her master's in administration and supervision and is an English teacher. She has been in the education system for over forty years and has been a mentor for about nine years. When Faith started as a beginning teacher, she realized that nothing that she learned in her teacher program in college prepared her to teach her students. However, due to the induction program she received a lot of support from her mentors and colleagues which gave her strategies to become an effective teacher and stay in the education system. Faith believes being a mentor to a beginning teacher can be career changing for both parties and states the following:

Being a support to incoming teachers is very important. Um, a good mentor can make the difference in a person's career. Uh, when you have a mentor who is not vested in the program and who does not take that responsibility seriously, uh, it trickles down to the teacher and then to the students who that teacher would be interacting with that year. I think sometimes mentors can make the difference in our retention of good teachers (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

## **Program Coordinator**

**Grace.** Grace is an African American female in her early fifties. She has her bachelor's degree in English and is the English department chair. She has been an educator for twenty years and this is her fourth year being the teacher induction program coordinator on her campus. Grace feels honored to be in a position to help other teachers. She has a strong desire to nurture and guide her new colleagues. She is a strong advocate of observing and modeling appropriate behavior. Grace summed up her thoughts and said candidly:

Being the coordinator means assisting teachers when they are new to teaching, to give them the guidance, to give them or, to show compassion, you know, to make sure that every question they have is answered and make sure that they are given strategies when they're not really familiar with the school or with teaching period, to give them good strategies that they could use (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

## **Administrator**

**Harrison.** Harrison is a White male in his early forties. He has his master's in educational leadership and is a former teacher and assistant principal. He has been in the education system for over fifteen years and has a total of four years of experience as an assistant principal. As a former classroom teacher, Harrison knew first-hand how it felt to be a small fish in a big pond. Thus, he took his experience to stress the importance of not only being a non-judgmental administrator but a supportive mentor who models good instruction and flawless transitions. As he reflected on his role supporting beginning teachers, Harrison said:

The other side of being an administrator is needing to be a coach for teachers, especially new teachers. And some people are better at that than others. So, I think probably the coaching part of it is the most important part of being an assistant principal and being supportive, being able to answer questions, not being looked at as an evaluator, but more of as a mentor (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

## **Codes**

Responses to the open-ended interview questions were analyzed using qualitative, validated coding measures as this confirms accuracy in reporting emerging patterns, themes, and

results in data (Creswell, 2018). A fuller description of the creation of codes was discussed in Chapter Three under the Data Analysis Procedure section. The interviews were transcribed and reviewed for accuracy. The information obtained was sorted using the constant comparative technique using a qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Responses offered by participants were also analyzed, coded, and categorized based upon the participants perception of the support beginning teachers received in the district's teacher induction program. The codes were defined based on the information obtained from the participants and served to summarize, synthesize, and sort the countless comments made by the educators during the interviews. I coded open-ended responses by generating a list of all the responses to a specific question. I assigned a code to each response to support each of the research questions. Each response fit into one of the code categories. Coding responses into themes was also beneficial for identifying mutual and conflicting philosophies expressed by the participants.

### **Themes**

After collecting data from eight participants, three beginning teachers and five members on the leadership team (three mentors, the program coordinator, and one administrator), themes were identified by examining the participant's interviews. A more detailed procedure of the formation of themes is discussed in Chapter Three under the Data Analysis Procedure section. After codes were formed from the interviews, I then looked for patterns to create themes. As previously stated, I used the constant comparative technique using a qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). First, I identified significant statements across all the interviews of participants' experiences in relationship to the phenomenon. From there, I recognized noteworthy statements and labeled them as one of the open codes. Finally, I clustered the 15 open codes into three themes. Three themes emerged from

this analysis: (a) understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development, (b) creating a community for beginning teacher's development, and (c) influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development. Table 2 presents the list of open-codes, number of times the open-code appeared in the interviews, and three themes that emerged from synthesized data.

Table 2. List of Emerging Themes

Themes	Code Concepts	Codes	Code Instances
Understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development	Barriers	Gaps in preservice training	4
		Challenges of beginning teachers	10
	Beginning teacher's perspective	Experiences of beginning teachers	21
		Beginning teacher's perception of support given by the leadership team	34
Creating a community for beginning teacher's development	Interaction	Building trust and healthy relationships	17
		Making time to support beginning teachers	27
		Communication with beginning teachers	21
	Safe Place	Work environment for beginning teachers	17
Influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development	Support for beginning teachers	Types of support given to beginning teachers	19
		Strategies and resources for beginning teachers	45
		Impact of support for beginning teachers	50
	Leadership team's perspective	Training to support beginning teachers	10
		Leadership team's perception of support given to beginning teachers	61
		Challenges of the leadership team in supporting beginning teachers	9

(table cont'd)

Themes	Code Concepts	Codes	Code Instances
	Improvements	Suggestions to improve the support given to beginning teachers	14

### Understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development

When beginning teachers enter the classroom, they possess limited amount of experiences, skills, and abilities. To become effective at their craft, novice teachers require molding and encouragement to persist in their career and impact their professional development. Four distinct sub-themes were identified within the main theme: (a) Gaps in preservice training, (b) Challenges of beginning teachers, (c) Experiences of beginning teachers, and (d) Beginning teacher's perception of support given by leadership team.

**Gaps in preservice training.** This code represented the least occurrences of any code yet findings were significant. Some beginning teachers entered the classroom with gaps in their knowledge. After entering the classroom, all of the beginning teachers found they lacked knowledge in classroom management and differentiated instruction. All of the beginning teachers interviewed did not initially go to school to become a teacher and have alternative teaching certifications. Brenton, a beginning teacher, completed his undergraduate degree in kinesiology, which prevented him from taking a sufficient number of courses in education. Brenton stated,

I initial did not go to undergrad to become a teacher. I was a sub for a couple of years before I decided to take that path. I thought about it long and hard and believed this is where I need to be. I was already finishing up my degree so taking additional classes in education just wasn't possible. I did have to go get an alternative certification with the state. The process was intense I was teaching my first year and getting my credentials at the same time. The training was limited because everything was done online but I guess it was enough to put me in the classroom. I wish that I received more guidance from them because I didn't come into this professional with any official training. I mean I was a sub, that is totally different than being a teacher, a huge difference. Trainings on lesson plans and of course, classroom management would have been nice to get in the beginning. I was able to get these skills by trial and error. This made my first-year very difficult,

especially since I was not placed into the program until my second-year teaching. (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Having gaps in preservice training is not a new phenomenon. The leadership team was asked to describe their experiences as a beginning teacher and all of their responses mirrored the fact that college did not prepare them for the actual classroom. For example, Faith, a mentor, recalled her experience as a new teacher, she stated that although she went to school to become a certified teacher, nothing prepared her for the challenges she endured in the classroom. Here is her testimony,

As a beginning teacher, I was very insecure and every day was a new challenge for me that I felt ill equipped to handle because, uh, the kind of challenges that I experienced in my classroom, were not things that we talked about in the college classrooms, when we were being prepared to go out into the field, none of the situations that I encountered were in any of the textbooks that we used in class. So, um, it was challenging (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Preservice teacher education programs serve as the first form of professional development that future teachers complete to enter into the profession. According to literature, these certification programs consist of a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical experience (Kane, Rockhoff, & Staiger, 2006). The overall aim is for the graduating teachers to support students with diverse needs regarding their social, economic, academic and emotional well-being. However, the beginning teachers shared that was not their experience when entering into the teaching profession. During the interviews, the beginning teachers disclosed that they obtained an alternative teaching certification and was not given sufficient training before entering the classroom. This may be due to the fact that most schools that hire teachers with alternative certifications are understaffed and quickly need to fill vacant positions. The teachers agreed that most of their experience came after they accepted their teaching position. The numerous of gaps in preservice training or the lack thereof can only be rectified with mentoring,

professional development, and experience. Nonetheless, beginning teachers face a host of challenges upon entering the classroom.

**Challenges of beginning teachers.** Beginning teachers face a multitude of challenges. Thus, challenges of beginning teachers require a great deal of time and attention from the leadership team. One of the challenges that many teachers face is receiving constructive criticism from an observation. All teachers want to be recognized as being proficient in the classroom, so receiving negative reports can be stressful and decrease their confidence in teaching. Brenton alluded to this by stating,

I was informed and instructed. My mentor would tell me, you cannot take these things here, personal, um, and for a young teacher, when you get a negative report, when you get this, that, and the other, um, it's hard not to take it personally. It's hard to not to feel like it's a personal attack on you and your ability to do what you do (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Another young teacher had to learn to be flexible when planning her lessons. As any veteran educator may know that when you deal with children, lesson plans are often changed due to unforeseen circumstances. Being flexible can present itself to new teachers as challenge in the beginning of their career. Christina, a beginning teacher, related the following sentiment,

When you're young and when you're new, you're like, okay, gotta stick to the plan, but it doesn't always stick to the plan. There's always something coming up at school, whether it's an event or people are absent, you know, and sometimes you can't do exactly what you've planned. Like, you know, if I have something planned, that's totally opposite of the energy in the room, I might have to on the fly change it up a little bit, just to keep student engagement high. And sometimes that's easier said than done (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

During one of the interviews, Arianna, a beginning teacher, revealed that being an elective teacher gave her freedom to teach her students but it also left room for challenges. Such challenges were discussed in the following manner,

I experienced a lot of challenges. I did not have a curriculum coming in. Um, so that was hard trying to figure out what exactly I was going to teach. Cause, uh, the class was not,



was a very new, the course I was teaching, one of the courses I was teaching was a brand-new course that did not come with a curriculum. So, trying to figure that out was, um, cool, but it was hard. I was able to create a curriculum with one of the administrators and my mentor, it took some time. I remember googling a lot of resources which was new to me. (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Although hiring new teachers with alternative certification may fill open positions in understaffed schools, administrators must take into account that some new alternative certified teachers may not come with certain experiences as new teachers who obtained a traditional teaching license. The lack of theoretical and field experiences may field many challenges of fresh teachers. All of the new staff members commented that being a teacher was a huge adjustment, since their previous careers involved working with adults. Teaching adolescents is unlike any other profession in the world. The teachers chimed that they were hired to be a classroom teacher, but quickly realized that before they could teach, they had to transform into other roles such as counselor, parental figure, and even a minister. In their other careers, the mentees' roles were set and rarely did they have to put on multiple personas in their work life. Comprehensively, the support or the lack thereof played a huge role of their experience of the teaching profession.

**Experiences of beginning teachers.** Teachers host a variety of experiences from their first-year in the classroom. The interviews revealed that some of teachers were more prepared physically, emotionally, and mentally than others. While others only had preconceived notions of what life will be like when they enter the classroom based upon courses taken in college. When asked to reflect on her experiences, Arianna summed up what she expected when she accepted her position as a teacher,

I expected certain things such as the behaviors of the students, and it's sad to say, like the negative behaviors of students, I definitely expected that. I not expect the positive, cause there's been way more positivity than negative. Um, so I, wasn't also expecting to have the type of relationships I have with my students. They're like my babies, you know, so,

um, I was not expecting that. I also was expecting to come in with a lot more tools and resources and that was not the case. But my first-year experience had its lows but I can honestly say I had way more highs. I feel blessed because I know that this is not the case for many other new teachers (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Some educators were hit hard with the harsh realities of teaching adolescents. Devin had a different perspective that Arianna as he relived his experience as a beginning teacher,

It was difficult as a beginning teacher. I actually wanted to give up, I didn't want to go back my second year. I was contemplating becoming a truck driver because I just could not go into the classroom again. I went in with this preconceived notation that if I was their friend, then they would like me and respect me, but that definitely was not the case. They don't need a friend they need structure. I knew my content, but I lacked classroom management. It was hell my first year (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

The experiences shared by participants provided a more profound understanding of their choice to enter the teaching profession. Their decision to become a teacher was connected to their influences from family, friends, and professional ambitions. Although, none of the teachers believed that they were prepared to teach initially, the teachers believed that they were eventually prepared to teach based on support from their colleagues. Several topics poised as challenges to the participants as they shared their experiences during their interviews. Student behavioral problems, lack of materials and resources, workload, and parental involvement were issues mentioned numerous times in the interviews. Additionally, the teachers identified the impact of planning their curriculum and executing the instruction had on their classroom practices. The participants agreed that they learned by a combination of trial and error and strategies to use in their daily practices provided by their mentors. The stories of these participants first-year experience can be viewed as a testimony lived by many other educators. In spirit, this shared phenomenon can make forming communities of teamwork beneficial for beginning educators.

**Beginning teacher's perception of support given by the leadership team.** Beginning teacher were asked about the support they received from the leadership team. During the interviews the teachers described their interactions with the leadership team. The beginning teacher's perception of the support they received was overall positive. They all agreed that time sometimes got in the way of meeting all of their needs, but believed that the leadership genuinely supported them. Arianna got help from many people and responded,

Being in the program actually helped me throughout the entire year. It made everything a lot smoother. For the most part, our coordinator, she was available to give me support. If she couldn't answer my question, she did not give me the run around. She would, you know, get me straight to the person that could answer my questions. Um, my mentor and the coordinator checked on me and made sure I was good with everything in my classes. Um, they were just very helpful (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Brenton described how it felt being a part of a community that teaches the future generation of teachers. He believed he was slighted the opportunity to be in the program during his first year as a teacher because he appeared to be older than the other beginning teachers. Thus, making him look like had experience. He retorted,

Um, so as far as administration goes, I feel like I was noticed and wanted to be a part of the team. I was glad to be invited in the program, because my first year threw me for a loop. I feel like if I wasn't overlooked in my first-year and was in the program I probably would've been a better teacher than I am right now. I was glad when I was told I was going to be in the program because I felt like I was going to get the help that I really needed. I feel like I was a part of something. And that's really the hardest thing as a young teacher you don't know anybody, um, you don't know how things go. Um, but with the program, it gives you somewhere to go and gives you those resources and people that can help you. I am proud that I stuck it through and decided not to quit, I am making a difference in world. So, a huge shot to my mentor, Ms. Grace, our coordinator, the administration team, and all of my colleagues that helped me (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Christiana expressed her feelings about the support she received from other teachers in the program. She appreciated the transparency about their struggles as new teachers and advice on how she can improve her craft,

I mean, it helps when you have other educators to bounce ideas off of, and some of the people in the program have more experience than me because it's like if you have three years of experience, that's better than a week experience, you know? Um, so it's nice to share challenges with others and they may have a solution that I hadn't thought of. Um, sometimes it's just good to share my frustrations with people who understand. Um, and it's good to have a mentor, and be involved in a program that you can go to with specific questions and challenges. Yea, I feel like they were supportive (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Teacher induction programs have been used throughout the nation's school districts to aid starting teachers transition into their new roles as educators. During the interviews, the participants were asked to reflect on how they were supported during their initial years of teaching. Their experiences described what professional supports were provided, who provided the support, and what support was needed from the school's leadership team during their initial years of teaching. According to the beginning teachers, the leadership was very supportive and concerned with making sure they felt comfortable teaching in the classroom. However, they also believed that the leadership team responsibilities stretched them thin. Their beliefs are evident in the fact some beginning teachers were overlooked and was not placed into the program until after their first year. The new teachers also appreciated having a safe place to vent out their concerns without feeling judged. Additionally, the teachers reported that having a mentor was the major component of the induction program which allowed them to receive a variety of professional development and resources to become proficient in teaching students. In general, the beginning teacher's perception of the induction program gave them a support system to rely on their peers for array of support and tools. In the end, however, the teacher induction program provided the beginning teachers with strategies to implement and a network of colleagues to share ideas with and ask for support. Moreover, the program gave the novice teachers a place to receive resources and advice about effective strategies to use when teaching high school students. Some of the strategies supported beginning teachers in planning lessons,

checking for understanding, establishing a rapport with students, and most importantly maintaining a safe environment for learning.

### **Creating a community for beginning teacher's development**

Beginning teacher need to feel comfortable in trying new strategies in the classroom and seeking guidance from other educators. Thus, creating safe working environment is mandatory when building physical, emotional, and intellectual security for beginning teachers. Four distinct sub-themes were identified within the main theme: (a) Building trust and healthy relationships, (b) Making time to support beginning teachers, (c) Communication with beginning teachers, and (d) Work environment for beginning teachers.

**Building trust and healthy relationships.** Team collaborations were an essential component of building trust and healthy relationships. The mentees highlighted how their mentors stressed the importance of building rapport with others, not just their students, but other colleagues. Developing positive relationships with colleagues can be rewarding. Working together with veteran teachers was key in resolving classroom related issues, but it also allowed them to gain friends. Arianna believed her colleagues and administrators made time for her and showed compassion towards her. This made forming positive relationships easy, Arianna described her experience this way,

Majority of our leadership team, um, is very transparent. Um, I have relationships with majority of leadership team and teachers, so if I need any help with anything, usually they're available or they try to make time where they can and they are not just stuck in their offices or classrooms, they're out and about, and, you know. It's not uncommon to see teachers working together on campus. You have to spend time with someone to get to know them and understand them. I believe I have true friends at work because we took the time to know each other. It's funny because one of my colleagues seen that I was having a bad and without me even telling him. I guess he has been around me long enough to know when I'm not my best and he was able to cheer me up a little bit. So, yea I'm grateful to have people at work who have my back (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

When forming a professional bond with her mentees, Faith used a collaborative approach. She believed that developing a new teacher is a team effort that definitely involves the starting teacher's input. This allowed her to have a great relationship with all of her mentees. When asked about the status of her mentee-mentor relationship, Faith shared the following statement,

I cannot think of any that wasn't successful. Um, you know, I tend to be a rather laid-back person and I think that helps, uh, when you're not perceived as overly aggressive or take control, everything you're doing is wrong, you have to do it my way. That's not the technique that I use. So, I think that the first thing is to build a relationship with whoever you're mentoring and, and have them really understand that I'm here to help you, you know, I'm here to, um, see what you're doing, uh, help you with some strategies, uh, nurture, uh, what you're doing. And at the same time, if we have some weaknesses, let's work together to, uh, try to improve those things and, you know, a, a mentor, sometimes it's perceived as a person I'm here to get, you know, you're not here to get the teacher, you should be there to help the teacher, help the teacher evolve into a great educator. My approach isn't the only way, but it helped me build lasting relationships. I'm still in contact with some of the teachers I have mentored in the past. (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Building trust and healthy relationships in the workplace is not something that can be checked off on a to-do list, but should always have a place among work priorities because it affects everything individuals do personally and professionally. The literature presented in this study highlights the importance of building strong relationships within the work environment. The education profession is social entity and thrives by building positive relationships. Elizabeth found being transparent and vulnerable was essential to encourage beginning teachers to professionally grow and collectively have the greatest impact on their student's success. Overall, the participants highlighted how they built lasting relationships with their colleagues by allotting time to get to know one another.

**Making time to support beginning teachers.** In order for beginning teachers to flourish time must be invested in them. The best time to support beginning teachers is when they need it the most. This usually occurs in the classroom full of diverse students. The leadership team

shared how they managed to make time for their mentees. Most stated that they had interactions with the young teachers frequently, but not as much as they hoped. Devin urged all veteran teachers to show support to beginning teachers and if you see them struggling help them. He answered,

A lot of times she needed me when I was teaching my own class and that was interesting. Her class was on the other side of the building, so my off period was last block and I would go over to the East side and sit in the class and you know, I would talk to her. She would explain what happened. I'm the type of person that is straight up, you gotta keep it real with them, that's the only way they are going to learn. So, I would say, well, you know, this happened because you dropped the ball or this happened because of, you know, this is what you need to do in this area. Every now and then I would go and observe her teach and from there we would have conversations about what went well and what did not (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Harrison stated that the administration understands the importance of making time to support new employees. Although he admits the time given to the teacher induction coordinator was not enough, Grace was allotted some time to plan and implement the program, Harrison said,

Mmm. The school supports the program mostly by providing the planning, the time for them to meet, um, ensuring that that professional development is provided. Mmm. And kind of just following up with, Ms. Grace, um, to see basically the same thing we would ask the new teachers, like, what do you need? How's it going? Same way with supporting teachers. Really. Yeah. We don't, we don't really do a lot besides just making it a part of our professional development cycle, I don't think we do a whole lot of extra. I wish we did because new teachers need a whole lot of extra support (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

A concern expressed by the new teachers is their sense they were not well prepared to provide effective instruction to all students in today's increasingly diverse classrooms.

According to the literature, to combat this evident stressor the induction program must create sufficient time for mentors and mentees to work together, this may increase beginning teacher's self-efficacy, satisfaction with teaching, retention in the profession, effectiveness in teaching, and student success (Ingersoll, 2009). The shared time provides a support group for mentees with

colleagues they could vent to and who would provide motivation during tough times. Making time to support beginning was reported a challenge, but also a priority for the leadership team. The time invested was seen as beneficial for both parties and was characterized as non-judgmental, constructive, and compassionate. The best way to communicate with beginning teachers is to show them that you have time to support their needs. In the end, starting teachers need their peers to collaborate with them on the best path to success in the profession.

**Communication with beginning teachers.** The leadership team agreed that the program helped them communicate with beginning teachers via text messages, phone calls, and time to check on them. The communications between beginning teacher and veteran teachers covered a variety of topics such as sharing resources and ideas, lesson planning, helping set up the classrooms, and answering questions. When things were not going well, mentees reported that their mentors communicated with them to resolve any problems. Arianna voiced how helpful it was to receive contact information for all the participants in the program. She detailed it in this fashion:

We gave our contact information to Ms. Grace, who was our coordinator. She asked us if it was okay if she distribute the information to everyone in the program. We all were cool with it. She then emailed the contact list to everyone. And um, well being able to have that contact information for your mentor and others actually really helped out a lot. I was able to text my mentor anytime (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Grace, the program coordinator on her campus, was very hands-on with her mentees. She stressed the importance of being present when mentors and mentees needed her. Most of the concerns she dealt with were classroom management. She supported the beginning teachers in the following way:

So, I not only meet with the mentee, I actually go and observe as well. What I'm trying to do is make sure that whatever is not to the satisfaction of the administrator that I get to that mentee before the administrator does. And we just kind of perfect what they're doing in the classroom, activities, the agenda, the whole nine. Um, I try to, um, make sure that



the mentees and I meet individually at least once every two weeks and with the administrators, it's once a week, I'm just giving them the input that I'm getting from the mentees and mentors. And so, I, talked to the mentees pretty much, as far as the afterschool meetings are concerned, we meet at least once or twice a month, and I'm going over important information with them (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

In every school community, communication plays a crucial role in building effective teachers. When educators communicate, how often, what educators talk about, and the methods of communication both construct and form their realities (Breaux & Wong, 2003). This implies that communication can be both a way to analyze and understand the process of effectively mentoring new colleagues to influence their actions and understanding. The leadership reported communicating with the beginning teacher daily. The interactions ranged from simply checking in on the mentees to working together on instructional practices. The interactions were done in person in classrooms or offices, by phone, and emails. Majority of the communication occurred throughout the workday and sometimes transpired afterschool. The site coordinator, Grace, recalled how she communicated to the new teachers and mentors that their time is valuable and that their voices matter. The open line of communication allowed the participants to be receptive to feedback on the effectiveness of the induction program. Furthermore, the beginning teachers welcomed honest feedback that suggests what they needed to improve upon, but also celebrate their successes. Beginning teacher often need continuously reinsuring in an uplifting atmosphere. All-encompassing, a supportive work environment may enhance teacher quality and improve retention.

**Work environment for beginning teachers.** School environments are an important part of the infrastructure of communities and play a critical role in supporting beginning teachers. As administrators and other teachers interact with new employees while running a school or providing instruction to students, they ensure that the working environment is inviting and

supportive of developing new teachers. There are numerous ways faculty members can make newcomers feel safe such as being encouraging and motivating, allowing the rooms of mentees and mentors be near each other, and allowing the mentees and mentors to observe one another. One participant shared how close proximity with his mentor helped him make his transition into the classroom smoother. Brenton recalled his experience this way,

My mentor was right down the hall from me too. So, we had, we had conversations a lot of times about things that, uh, I might, be having an issue with. Because our rooms were next door to each other we seen each other every day, we grew a friendship and that relationship made me feel like I wasn't bothering him with petty stuff. It also helped that he was a disciplinarian. And of course, a lot of issues you have as a young teacher are with discipline because, you know, kids gonna try it until they know they can't. But he encouraged me to not give up and gave me strategies to implement in my classroom. His availability made me comfortable to go to him. Like I said I felt like I um, the work environment was good, I feel like I can go to Ms. Grace or my mentor and that means a lot to me as a new teacher (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Christiana believes despite having a rough first-year experience having supportive colleagues allowed her to feel comfortable to continue to teaching. She said transparently:

I think the school environment is great. I mean, I like working where I work. I've been helped out a lot by other teachers. Um, it's more just, you know, becoming, getting my own footing as a teacher and just determining what works for me and what doesn't work for me in the classroom with the kids and developing a rapport with the kids. The people around me helps with it (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Harrison, an assistant principal, mentioned how the administrators on campus provide a safe environment for beginning teacher. He replied in this manner,

Well, we do our best to make sure that all of our teachers enjoy coming to work. It can be a little difficult to do this, we have over 40 faculty members, but yea we do our best. One thing we try to do for new teachers is making sure their workload is not overwhelming. You know we try not to give them duty so that they can focus on being better. If they do go to duty it isn't nearly as much as established teachers. We are a team. I, we also check on them, we want them to know that even though we are administrators we were once teachers too, so we know what it's like to step foot in a new work environment (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

The participants commented on their perception of the school culture for developing early career teachers. The beginning teachers described how important it was for them to build a relationship with not only the leadership team, but also their colleagues. The new hires explained their relationship with the leadership team and colleagues and stated that they felt supported by the entire faculty and staff. They reported that their relationship with their mentors to some extent reduced feelings of isolation and anxiety. The beginning teachers also shared that they loved the fact that the leadership team did personal “check-ups,” which demonstrated to them that the leadership team genuinely cared about them. The beginning teachers also voiced that they appreciated the time and commitment the leadership team invested in mentoring them by hearing their concerns about the program and making certain changes when possible to accommodate their concerns. According to the beginning teachers, transparency was the key to building positive relationships with their new colleagues. One of the beginning teachers stated that they wanted the leadership team to make the teacher induction program a priority and focus all about “checking off the boxes” in order to complete the required elements of the program. Overall, early career teachers felt the actions of the leadership team assisted in creating a sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction by being visible throughout the building, being positive and encouraging to them, and building trust through transparency and honesty.

The leadership team that participated in this present study recognized the fact that new teachers were expected to perform the same tasks as veteran teachers, but often perform them with less skills, because they have less on-the-job experience. The leadership team also noted that for most first year teachers, their career lives are consumed with just surviving. Therefore, the administrators and site coordinator seen the need to create an environment that helps bridge the gap between the expectations of teaching and learning, and the actual realities of the

profession. It seems from their responses, that this could be done by having clear expectations, consistent communications, being open minded and receptive, respecting the new hires time, building a great rapport with the novice teachers, and being understanding and compassionate of beginning teacher's needs, questions, and failures. Yet, not all of these strategies were implemented in the program. The administrator participating in the study believed that the leadership team was did the best that they could, but knew they could possibly do more. One of the mentors revealed how spending time with their mentee allowed them to bond and understand the best methods to support his mentee. Another mentor insisted that making time for their mentee was a struggle, however, she had to make it a priority to effectively support her new colleague. Overall, the leadership team was able to create a safe learning and teaching community for beginning teachers by spending time and communicating with the beginning teachers regularly. This allowed both parties to get to know each in a way that the leadership team is not seen as evaluators, but mentors. The participants' retort also uncovered that there are many factors that influenced the growth and development of beginning teachers. At the very minimum mentorship and flexibility should be provided to their journey towards mastery.

### **Influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development**

The leadership team which includes the administrators, the program coordinator, and mentors set the tone at the top, which permeated the school culture for beginning teachers. These internal and external factors influenced the perception of support given to beginning teachers. Seven distinct sub-themes were identified within the main theme: (a) Types of support given to beginning teachers, (b) Strategies and resources for beginning teachers, (c) Impact of support for beginning teachers, (d) Training to support beginning teachers, (e) Leadership team's perception of support given to beginning teachers, (f) Challenges of Leadership Team in supporting beginning teachers, and (g) Suggestions to improve the support given to beginning teachers.

**Types of support given to beginning teachers.** Providing a variety of support is necessary to ensure green teachers are competent in the classroom. Teachers need emotional, social, and physical support from their colleagues and administrators. Understanding the needs of beginning teachers and the students they serve is vital when determining the type of support the teacher needs at the moment of interaction. Supporting beginning teachers emotionally is crucial. The leadership team stated that providing emotional support were simple gestures like greeting them in the morning or checking on them regularly. Devin talked about emotionally supporting teachers and said,

I walk around doing lunch, talking to other teachers, you know. I've seen teachers that were having bad days on my off period and say, oh, go and chill, go get a Coke or something and I'll watch your class. Sometimes you need that. You gotta step away (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Physical support involves helping new teachers with the practical or logistical aspects of teaching, such as curriculum and instruction, organizing the classroom, gathering resources, learning school policies, and navigating the school building. Elizabeth, remembers making time for her mentees to provide physical support, she said,

I think at first, they were not classified as effective, but I, we looked at it, we analyzed the observation reports, we saw where we need to improve, um, where the weaknesses were and where we need to build upon. And so, we dug into really working on those areas of weakness. So, if one area of weakness was classroom management, which one was for a teacher, I really worked with him on some techniques, um, to help them with classroom management. And one thing that I did with the teachers this year is that I implemented peer walks. So, they got to see, master teachers in their classroom. So, if, I know a teacher is having issues, with, uh, classroom management. I allowed them to go to another teacher's classroom during the class period, I had coverage for their class and allowed them to sit in and observe the teacher so they can pick up something that they could use in their classroom (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Beginning teachers need to be surrounded by a network of educators. These communities provide them with social support where teachers can collaborate and learn from each other.

These groups can be formed in common planning periods where teachers are teaching the same grade or content area. Faith refers to her own social support, she responded,

So, in each, uh, situation where I have a mentor, we had common planning periods. Uh, we were always in the same department, so, you know, that facilitated a good opportunity to interact there. And, you know, I've always been a kind of afterschool person. And so, anybody that I've worked with, whether they were that or not, they kind of became that because if they wanted to pull my coattail or get some information or get help, they knew they could just come to my room and I'd be there after school. But formally we had common planning. Okay. And informally, we were able to interact in the department meetings and always afterschool. These interaction times allowed us to discuss what happened in our classrooms and what's next, what we need to in our next lesson. We planned a lot in our planning meetings (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

As previously stated, the beginning teachers entered the profession with little to no preservice training. Hence, the mentee teachers needed a team of supporter to help them navigate the complexity of teaching adolescent students. The support from the leadership team and their colleagues came in various forms, and the literature reviewed for this study discussed the importance of school culture, climate, collaboration, and communication. The leadership discussed how they were able to give emotional, physical, and social support to the starting teachers. Essentially, the leadership team encouraged the teachers to continue teaching, provided instructional resources to better their teaching ability, and collaborated with them on lesson planning and refining teaching strategies, identify needs of students throughout the academic year. Although, the new career teachers faced many challenges, they looked to the leadership team to guide them through it. Inclusively, the strategies and resources given to the neophyte teacher had an impact on their first-year experience as a teacher.

### **Strategies and resources for beginning teachers to overcome challenges.**

Numerically, this sub-theme returned the third highest open code value and was found 45 times in the data. At first glance, the challenges seem overwhelming for developing teachers, but with

the assistance of the leadership team they were able to cope with difficult issues. Across the board the beginning teachers agreed that seeking advice from their administrators, mentors, and colleagues through observations and feedback and attending professional development trainings were effective strategies to overcoming challenges they faced in their classrooms. To become competent at their craft, beginning teachers were encouraged early in their career to build a rapport with their colleagues and students. Regarding building positive relationships, Arianna declared,

Building relationships with my students and other teachers was, is a must, it's the only way I could have survived. I'm the type of person that if I have a question, I'm not afraid to go and ask for help. So, talking with other teachers and I guess picking their brain if you want to call it that, um, allowed me to get to know my coworkers. (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Effective professional development is important for new teacher's learning and is a continuous process that promote teachers' mastering new knowledge, becoming a proficient teacher, which in return, help improve students' achievement. All this training gave the developing teachers the greatest chance of success as they met new challenges in education world. Although all novice teacher received professional development only some were given the opportunity to participant in specialized training in their content area. During the one-on-one interview, Christiana divulged her experience and said,

They encouraged me, they made me go to trainings. They encouraged trainings. I went to a social studies training. I was in a writing workshop. Um, they're investing in me and in my education with them so that I can be a better teacher (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

When classroom procedures are clear and productive, it makes everything run smoother and allows more time for teaching and learning. Mentors discussed how they initially had to model how to implement vital procedures in the classroom. The strategies about classroom

management allowed their mentees to become better teachers. Elizabeth, a mentor, acknowledged her contributions by affirming,

I would like to say that I impacted my mentees greatly because I have seen some significant changes over the school year and they've grown to be some very good teachers, you know, they have their classroom management down and I like to say that I helped them with it. One thing I shared with my mentees is that no matter what, you have to be consistent, fair, but also show compassion. Those three things will take you a long way when establishing classroom management. It definitely helped me (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Differentiated instruction is really not a new concept. It has been in the education sector for a very long time in the guise of 'mixed-ability teaching'. All of the participants agreed that teaching diverse students was a challenge. However, with the support of other veteran teachers, they were able to address the needs of their students. Yet, this did not happen overnight, one of the mentors also wished she had the skills she has now to effectively teach her students when she first started. Faith said indefinitely,

My role impacted teacher effectiveness because I was able to provide them with strategy, proven strategies, research-based strategies that will work in classrooms that they were serving in. It's hard to teach a class with different learning needs, but that is what we have to do because this is what is required from us. What helped me was having small groups, stations with different activities that helped students understand the same skills, and peer tutors. And so, once they were exposed to the strategies and realize what worked for them and what didn't work for them, um, that helped them to achieve success in their evaluations and in their performances. I can think back to when I was a new teacher. And I think of all my first students, I was like, oh my God, they missed so much because I was learning, you are learning. And so probably by year three or four, you know, you finally have it almost together so much more so than you had when you first started. And you realize that those kids that came through during your first year, well, for me, and I'm going to be honest, my first and second year students, you know, they didn't get as much as my kids got later, you know, as the years went on, when I was able to figure it out. I guess when you know better, you do better (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Emotional and social wellness is essential to a beginning teacher's survival in the early years of teaching. Supporting the emotional and social well-being of beginning teachers is critical for creating a positive school climate and retaining quality educators. When things were



not going well, mentors reported that they had to continuously motivate their mentees and show compassion. Devin, a mentor, was highly engaged in supporting his mentee, he gave her pep talks like this,

Find something that you enjoy doing and do it when you are off work, it can be anything like painting, walking, or just sleeping. Have fun, meet new people. As much as I love teaching, I do not make it my everything. I have a life outside of this place. Sometimes you have to turn it off to get peace. You gotta learn to leave the struggles of teaching at the school. Like I said, at the end of the day, you can't go home saying I'm so tired. You're gonna be tired from yelling at kids. If you're tired, you're going to be tired from teaching. I think, no, I know this is how I was able to stay in the game for over twenties years and enjoy it (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Observations are implanted to improve the quality of teaching. Evaluations can be seen as trivial to beginners when trying to navigate what is expected of them. Brenton shared his concern with being observed and was relieved when the coordinator provided assistance to the teacher induction program cohort. He shared the following statement,

Ms. Grace went over class evaluations and what the administrator's expectations were. Um, she literally broke it down and, explained to us with every, guideline, every criteria that that was going to be on there. Um, and she went through it line by line and explain what that meant or what that looked like and gave us examples, um, and gave us, you know, her tips and tricks from her decades of servitude as a teacher (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

As the researcher, I found receiving strategies and resources from their mentors one of the major factors the new educators perceived as essential to their progression as a teacher. These supports came in many forms, and the literature reviewed for this study discussed the importance of providing tools for teachers to expand and test their teaching abilities. According to the literature, an effective leadership provides strategies and resources to developing teachers that enhance their teaching practices to positively influence student achievement. To make a difference in teacher performance, the support needs to be both individualized and on-going. The participating leadership accounted their actions and how they contributed to supporting new

teachers by sharing best teaching practices and resources. One of the biggest strategies both the beginning teachers and leadership team found helpful were discussions on classroom management. The skill to properly manage a classroom conducive to learning is mastered by very few new teachers. The beginning teacher communicated in the interviews that observing teachers with great classroom management allowed them to envision how they want their classrooms to look. Developing a comprehensive induction program is critical for inexperienced teachers. The types of support given to neophyte teachers can have a lasting impact of their profession.

**Impact of support for beginning teachers.** This code had the second highest instance of all codes with 50 instances coded throughout the data. The idea of teacher induction programs was to provide new teachers assistance because their preservice training in college was insufficient. Although the participants believe the program need some improvements, they confirmed that the impact of the program was positive. Christiana expressed how participating in the program enhanced her self-efficacy:

I think it helped my confidence because it made me realize that I wasn't alone in a lot of the problems that I was experiencing. I was not the only one experiencing them. So being involved in the program allowed me to know that it was okay if things didn't go according to plan and that happened to other people as well. Um, so it was helpful to find a community like that (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Brenton described the effect of participating in the teacher induction program on his satisfaction in the teaching profession:

I'm very satisfied. Um, I know for a fact, if not for the program, I would be dissatisfied. I probably have an unsatisfactory rating about teaching, my first year as a teacher was a struggle that I try to forget. I was not a part of a community like this my first year. But because of the program, like I said, it gave me a place to go, it gave me people to talk to, it gave me, um, those resources that young teachers need. And because I had resources, I did not get overwhelmed. I didn't feel personally attacked. And being able to, move through this thing more smoothly than I ever would by myself (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Harrison believes that their work allows new employees to want to come back and teach another year. He attributes some of it to their participation in the program, he cited,

Well, I think the impact so far has been very positive because right now basically we have a hundred percent retention rate with our beginning teachers. So, not only are the teachers satisfied and want to come back, but administrators have been satisfied with their performance and want them to come back. So, it's really a two-way street there. They're performing well enough to keep their jobs, but they also want to come back (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Arianna was most expressive when talking about her professional growth. She was very pleased with her evaluation scores and thanked her mentor for helping her achieve her high ratings. With enthusiasm exclaimed,

Knowing that I had that support, and that all the support that I received my first year helped me with my evaluation and to be able to score so high on my very first evaluation ever. I think, showed me that, hey, this is something I want to continue to be a part of, you know. Um, but this is something that I think every new teacher should be a part of. Um, they helped me with resources to be a better teacher and, you know, overall, I ended up having a great result with my evaluation at the end of the school year (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Faith is confident she made a difference in her mentees' ability to teach their students, saying,

I think that my role as a mentor, um, help them to achieve a great amount of success in the classroom, because oftentimes I think that the person, you're mentoring is looking for a model. Well, whatever it is that I'm going to pour into them is going to impact what they pour into the students. I was able to provide them with strategies, proven strategies, research-based strategies that will work in classrooms, um, that they were serving in. Um, because ultimately, you know, our goal is to have students achieve success and success is students learning (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

The participants were asked to reflect how the induction program impacted beginning teacher's career. According to the literature review, induction programs provides inexperienced teachers with the necessary models and tools for beginning their teaching careers, as well as specific guidance aimed at helping them meet performance standards. The

participating site had a comprehensive induction program for new teachers that included mentoring from the leadership team, workshops and trainings, and continuous observations followed by feedback for improvements. The participants believed that the induction program needed some improvements but had a positive impact on not only the teachers, but the students they served. The school environment allowed the beginning teachers to feel safe to ask for help, which increased their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. A major finding was all of the beginning teachers reportedly returned the following school. The administrator also noted that the leadership works hard to provide the resources and skills to rookie teachers to enhance their teaching competency. Although, the participants did not go into specific details about how the program impacted their student's academic performance, they believed because the teacher's craft improved it impacted their students in an affirmative way. An important aspect of supporting beginning teachers is giving the leadership team a plan and tools to implement that plan. Effective induction programs for beginning teachers require the leadership team to undergo a formal training.

**Training to support beginning teachers.** Training to support beginning teachers is necessary. Training can include how to adult learning theories, how to model lesson, how to observe and give feedback. Yet, all of the mentors and the assistant principal agreed that they did not receive any formal training to support beginning. They used their own personal experience to lead them in the role of mentorship. Devin alluded to this by stating,

Every day you walk in the classroom is you're training. No, nobody really can train you to be a mentor. There's no class that you go to because people that run classes don't teach at the schools we teach at, they will come in from Philadelphia and New York or they'll come from a predominantly white school and try to tell you how to deal with black kids. And it just doesn't, it just don't work. Every day. You walk in the classroom is your, is the best education that you can get. Nobody, you can't read no book about it. I mean, you can try it. Uh, it was required when I was a mentor to read, uh, Steven Colby, uh, first days of school, I think the name of it was, and it's a really good book. You can apply that

at any year that you've been teaching. It's good for new teachers or if it's good for teachers as 30 years, if you haven't read, it's a really good book that helps out teachers (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Grace described succinctly the criteria used across the district to select teacher induction program coordinators:

So, I went through a program, um, of about 10 plus hours maybe, and not to mention you have to go through, uh, several professional developments that are geared toward helping new teachers. Those are the kinds of experiences I've had and not to mention, um, just my own experience. Um, you've surely number one have to be a highly qualified teacher. You have to have some like successful years, five years or more of, of teaching and, uh, of getting great scores on your evaluations. So, it's not just like you're pushed in there to help new teachers and you yourself were not an effective teacher that would defeat the purpose. But, um, those are the kinds of training. If, if you want to call it that, uh, my own experience, professional developments and getting continued education on, uh, trends that, that new teachers need to know about (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Harrison does not recall receiving any specific training on supporting new employees. However, he believes that as an administrator it would benefit him to know best strategies to support them. His support comes from his own experience as a teacher and what he expects from them. Here is Harrison comment on the topic,

Oh, I haven't received any training regarding the program. I know what the program is because I've seen it at various schools, but I've never received any training on it, you know, I how it works or what exactly the purpose is. Although I know what it is. I just, I haven't, they never made me go to a training. It would be helpful to training on best strategies to mentor them and motivate them. I guess classes like how to teach students but for beginning teachers (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

There is no doubt that the leadership team is knowledgeable in their specializations. Yet, research insist that mentors, site coordinators, and administrators must undergo some form of training to understand how to best mentor beginning teachers (Breux & Wong, 2003). Surprisingly, only the site coordinator went through formal training to prepare her for her job. The other members on the leadership team indicated that their experience as a new teacher allowed them to have compassion to help the newcomers alleviate any stress about their new

work responsibilities. Additionally, the leadership team obtained their position on campus because of their history of successfully having great instructional practices that led to student learning advances. The participants also indicated that training in the future is needed because there were times when they felt like they did not have the knowledge to assist teachers in certain emergencies. There are many roles and responsibilities assigned to the leadership team to ensure beginning teacher are adjusted into the teaching community. These factors also contribute to their perception of how they believe they should support newcomers.

**Leadership team's perception of support given to beginning teachers.** Numerically, this sub-theme returned the highest open code value and was found 61 times in the data. The leadership team's support of beginning teachers sets the tone at the top and is the foundation of the teacher induction program. As new hires, novice teachers were vulnerable and required support. The leadership shared how their role contributed to supporting beginning teachers to reach competency in teaching the students they serve. Devin believes being a mentor means being there for his mentee in the way that she needed him, someone to vent, someone who can model proven strategies in the classroom, and someone who is patient.

You know, somebody, like I said, when you have somebody who's willing to help you out, when you have somebody that's willing to tell you, it's going to be all right, you know, that's gonna model for you and it's going to, uh, go in and sit with you and talk with you. My mentee had a hard time in the beginning. She was coming in to take over someone else's classroom, So, you can imagine that it was a rough transition. I remember when she called me one day and said she was done and she wasn't coming back. I had to give to her vent and then I gave her some tough love. I guess it paid off. Well she's definitely coming back. She's looking forward to coming back. I knew I had to keep a close eye on her because she was insecure in her ability to teach. So, I started to observe her teaching to see what she did, uh, to see what she did that may need some improvement on. Eventually she started to gain confidence, but it took some time to get her adjusted with working with kids (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Elizabeth's mentees taught different courses, but she was able to still help them develop pedagogical skills. This is how she was able to mentor her mentees,

The teachers that are in the magnet program that were first year teachers, I took them under my wing and just showed them, um, they know the content, but they don't know the, um, the classroom side of it. It would be like, okay, yeah. You know how to code or you know how to make a broadcast, but how can you effectively teach students to do the same thing? That's where I would come (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Faith used her experience as a teacher to provide resources for her mentees when they lacked certain skills. It was important for her to show them how to obtain resources so they can indulge in them whenever they needed to.

Okay, I would tell my mentees let's look at this or you can look here for activities. This is where you can find some help with this so that you can achieve mastery before you try to give it to the kids, because there's nothing worse than trying to reteach stuff, you know? I teach my mentees that you have to know your content. If you don't know your content nothing else matters. Once the content knowledge is down, we can talk about how to deliver it the students and classroom management is interconnected. But the content knowledge must be present. I am here not to judge my mentees and I believe that they know that by now. I want them to be honest with me, it's ok to not know, however its not okay to deliver wrong information to students when there are resources out there to help you understand the content (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

The role of the teacher induction program coordinators is to link new teachers with support. During her hall duty, the coordinator checked in with mentors and mentees and found out how things were going. While circulating the building, she found out what else she could do to support beginning teachers and mentors. Proudly, Grace stated what it means to be a teacher induction program coordinator on her campus,

Oh, wow, being a coordinator means assisting teachers when they are new to teaching, um, to give them the guidance, to show compassion, you know, to make sure that every question they have is answered and make sure that they are given strategies when they're not really familiar with the school or not just with the school, but with teaching period to give them good strategies that they could use in or out of the classroom. I am the liaison for new teachers. I believe it is my job to bring people and resources together to guide new teachers in being great educators (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

One of the administrator's responsibilities was to observe developing teachers formally and informally, complete an evaluation report, and provide feedback in a timely manner. As one of the administrators on campus, Harrison disclosed his role in supporting new teachers and how he wants to be perceived,

The other side of being an administrator is needing to be a coach for teachers, especially new teachers. And some people are better at that than others. So, I think probably the coaching part of it is the most important part of being an assistant principal and being supportive, being able to answer questions, not being looked at as an evaluator, but more of as a mentor (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

The leadership team was asked to reflect on how they supported novice during the interviews. Their experiences described what professional and personal supports were given to new teachers. The mentors believed that their main purpose in the induction program was to collaborate with their mentees on lesson planning, finding research-based instructional materials and resources, model best teaching practices, provide informative feedback on their mentee's teaching, and listen to their mentee's concerns and answer questions. The site coordinator, Grace, was the glue that kept the program together. It was her responsibility to match the mentees with a mentor, offer advice to both the mentors and mentees about their role in the program, host meeting and professional development for mentees, and report the progress of the beginning teachers to the administrators. The participating administrator reported he wanted to be seen as a mentor not an evaluator that comes in and gives negative feedback. He believes his role as an administrator allows him to give teachers autonomy to take risk and guide them as they discover their teacher identity. Overall, the leadership team voiced that their role was to be the newcomers bridge between inexperienced and positively impacting student achievement. Beginning teachers come to the profession with many gaps and require a lot of support from the leadership team. Like any given classroom, that support needs to be differentiated and unique to



the rookie teacher. Hence, the leadership team experienced a variety of challenges when trying to support beginning teachers.

**Challenges of the leadership team in supporting beginning teachers.** There are challenges embedded in every job. During one-on-one interviews, the leadership team described challenges while supporting new teachers. All the participants on the leadership team agreed that making time for beginning teachers was a challenge because they still had other responsibilities on campus. The leadership team echoed that it takes time to nurture a teacher into competency and sometimes the time needed is not available to them, however, they did their best they could with the time allotted. Devin recited his own challenges in supporting new teachers in a very weary tone of voice,

A lot of times they just want to give up, you know, no matter what you say, they want to give it. They say I can't do it, like you do it. And I'm saying I got over two decades, back then I didn't do it, like I'm doing it. You know, if you take me back to 1999 and have me look at the 2020 Guillory, I'll be like, I could never be that person. I can't be that person. And now, you know, there are a lot of people that's much greater than I am. I'm not saying that I'm the best teacher, but I'm saying what I do works for me and it took time and determination and for me not to give up. So, at times I struggled motivating my mentees to stay in the game and don't quit. Eventually it will get better (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Grace challenge was giving feedback to mentees. She had to show compassion and give constructive criticism at the same time and sometimes it did not always go so well. She resounded,

If a beginning teacher, did not want to discuss certain topics or was very defensive, that was a little challenging, but I realized that, um, everybody gets frustrated. So that's nothing new. Um, I would, you know, just being patient, I think that was the challenge, just being patient and realizing that sometimes new teachers come with their own ideas, being patient to see if what their idea is and if it's going to work. And if it's not working coming up with ways to be sensitive about how to refine their craft. I always like to start off with a glow that usually helps (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Harrison remembered how difficult it was to collaborate with beginning teachers on creating a new curriculum. He suggested that the task was very different than working with veteran teachers. He insisted veteran teachers have some experience with planning and he just had to approve the final layout. However, with the beginning teachers it was a hands-on assignment for him. He stated,

Well, for some elective teachers that taught new courses in the district, didn't have a curriculum. And some of the teachers were brand new teachers so that made it even more challenging trying to piece together a curriculum and show them how to complete lesson plan and how to implement the lessons in the classrooms. We found courses that were very similar at local colleges. In other cases, we just made our own curriculum, um, based on projects and skills, we thought that the students needed. In the beginning I had to do a lot because let's face these new teachers had no idea about creating a curriculum, but we worked on them together. I wanted to include them in the process because I wanted them to feel like they had a voice in what they were teaching, it was tough trying to explain things but it eventually worked out. At least I think so (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

The leadership team was presented with challenges while supporting novice teachers. They disclose these obstacles during the one-on-one interviews. One of the major challenges the leadership team faced was finding the time to support new teachers. Being a mentor for new teachers is not a light task. Beginning teachers came with no experience and heavily relied on the leadership team for support. This presented itself as a challenge when new teachers had emergencies or needed answers to questions when the leadership team was unavailable due to other obligations. These challenges created tension in the work place and resulted in leadership teams' disappointment with not being able to give the type of service mentee teachers deserve. There is no such thing as a perfect teacher induction program. Therefore, there is always room for improvement to program beginning teachers the best support system possible. Induction programs should have basic tenets but also, be structured so that individuals' needs are adequately addressed.

**Suggestions to improve the support given to beginning teachers.** During the interviews, the participants were asked how can the program improve to better serve beginning teachers. These suggestions are drawn from the participants and what they felt was lacking in the program. Elizabeth was not in an induction program, although there was one when she first started teaching. She also indicated the value it could possibly have on new teachers and how she felt she was left out. She voiced her opinion about allowing new hires go under the radar,

Um, the only thing that I can suggest for the program is to make sure that we get every single teacher, new teacher that come on our campus get into this program with a good mentor teacher, um, and not let anybody slip through the cracks like me and other teachers. I know a couple of teachers that I believed that needed help but didn't get because they fell through the cracks. I tried my best trying to juggle my responsibilities, mentoring my mentees, and helping those I see need help. But we definitely left some people out. So, just making sure that every new teacher is in the program and getting paired with great mentor teachers, just making sure that they do that with fidelity (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Faith endorsed the number one suggestion of improvement, time. She believed that most of her support happened afterschool but noticed that sometimes her mentees needed her during school hours. She was not able to give them full attention that they deserved because she also had classes she taught. She spoke candidly and said,

I think the interaction time needs to be better. Um, there needs to be more time built in for the mentor to be able to work with the mentee. Um, time is everything because it takes time to grow a teacher. Uh, it takes time for a teacher to, uh, have the kind of confidence necessary that the kids recognize, you know, when the kids recognize that you're confident and you know your material and you have a heart for them, I think that that helps. Yeah. That's something that they don't have right away is reputation, you know, and a good reputation solves a whole lot. This takes time, that mentors simply don't have (Personal communication with participant, July, 2020).

Arianna suggested that some on the leadership team had too many responsibilities on campus. She stated that restructuring the program so that the leadership team were not overwhelmed with other tasks will allow them to give more adequate support for beginning teachers.

Um, I can say this year, we kind of slipped a little with not having as much time and I know that was because I felt like our coordinator was being pulled in too many directions that she could not focus on us as much as she did the previous year. So, if she is not being pulled in so many directions where she can actually continue to focus on the program. I feel like it will be given more time, you know, to have those meetings and things like that. Last year, I believe we did more because she didn't have as much as she does now (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

Grace confirmed that her role was compromised by the additional task she took on this school year. She recommended the following for the upcoming school year,

To really get everything together, um, that would help a new teacher, I think an assistant leader, uh, would be great. I'm not sure how we could make the funding work, but having fresh eyes to assist me would be helpful to not only me, um, but the new teachers. Yea, because it just gives us, them more resources and more people they can confide in (Personal communication with participant, June, 2020).

After establishing emerging themes, a description from different perspectives, roles, and functions followed. The researcher developed a textural description, such as what was the experiences of the participants in the teacher induction program. One important finding from this single case study was that participants had a shared language. They used words and phrases central to mentoring such as "supporting beginning teachers", "support system," "building a relationship," "teamwork," "trust," "compassion," "time," "modeling," "transparent", "expectations", and "strategies." In collective, these words and phrases influenced participants' perception of one of Louisiana's teacher induction programs.

Surprisingly, all of the beginning teachers in this present study shared that they received an alternative teaching certification. Alternative certification is not a different certification, but an alternative route to the same certification that you receive in a traditional university teaching program. Alternative certification is an option for aspiring teachers with a college degree to become a solution for understaffed schools, especially in specific content areas such as math, science, and foreign languages. The benefits for alternative certifications are two sided: it allows

districts to find highly qualified teachers, and career changers to apply their job experience in classroom teaching without having to take a pause for one to two years to go back to school. In the state of Louisiana, alternatively certified teachers enter the classroom without preservice training. The participants were required to pass the appropriate content area Praxis exam, a basic skills test, and become employed in a school district in Louisiana. After receiving their teaching certification, the novice teachers entered their high school classrooms with no prior course work in the field of education.

The participants disclosed that the new hires participated in the same teacher induction program in the same manner as traditional certified teachers. Although some of the beginning teachers came in the profession with some content knowledge to meet the definition as a highly effective teacher, they often lack the necessary pedagogical knowledge and training to be an effective teacher (Torff & Sessions, 2009). Hence, the alternatively certified teachers at the study site lacked field experiences. This lack is important because field experiences expose preservice teachers to the classroom environment by providing observation and interactions with professionally certified experienced teachers (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009). Furthermore, field experiences expose preservice teachers to the diverse learners and classroom management strategies. Lack of field experiences contributed to the challenges that the beginning teachers faced. The trials of the beginning teachers demanded a different type of support from the leadership team to accommodate for their inexperience in teaching.

The early career teachers described professional support in terms of the teacher induction program. The participants had varying degrees of support given to the beginning teachers. Arianna shared that she appreciated the in-class observations and immediate feedback, while Brent became anxious when being observed by administrators. According to the literature,

beginning teachers want a leadership team that will guide them not micromanage by being involved in attending planning meetings, giving helpful advice about curriculum and instruction, and supporting them with discipline issues so that they can teach effectively. The mentees reported that their relationship with their mentors to some extent increased their teaching ability by assisting them with understanding the responsibility of being a teacher. They also reported that the sharing of teaching strategies and resources was important, but even more beneficial was their mentors' abilities to help them reflect critically on their own teaching. The neophyte teachers made some suggestions to improve the induction program. One of recommendations was allowing more time for their mentors to support them. Arianna also suggested that decreasing some of the site coordinator's, Grace, responsibilities so that she can have time to focus on the program.

The participants on the leadership team discussed their perception of how to support new colleagues. Interviewed leadership team members all stated that from their perspective, their primary role relative to fresh teachers is to ensure a safe working environment in which they have the materials, resources, and structure needed to do their jobs. According to the literature, the leadership team should provide emotional, social, instructional, and physical support for novice teachers by ascribing a shared commitment to establish a positive school culture of professional and personal growth. Although literature recommends that the leadership team needs training on how to best support beginning teachers, only the site coordinator received any formal training. The other members on the leadership team used their experience as beginning teachers and their understanding of what it means to mentor them to provide the best support to the new hires. The participating administrator suggested that he would want training on supporting the beginning teacher as he acknowledged the lack of formal training. Another

recommendation was making sure that every beginning teacher on campus is not overlooked and is inducted in the induction program.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The collective participants revealed information that led to themes mirroring the content of teacher development. All research questions were answered by one or more of the three themes described in detail in the previous section. The three themes were (a) understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development, (b) creating a community for beginning teacher's development, and (c) influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development.

#### **Research Question One**

What are the perceptions of beginning teachers about the teacher induction program? Research question one unpacked the effectiveness of a teacher induction program in Louisiana from the beginning teachers' point of view. Very early in their first year, beginning teachers, (Arianna, Brenton, and Christiana), realized they had gaps in their preservice training, such as lack of courses in classroom management and differentiated instruction, which made them great candidates for the teacher induction program. Thus, the novice teachers requested help with lesson planning, curriculum resources, school layout and procedures, and how to handle classroom management. The daily operational tasks were new to the novice teachers and the support of their peers and administrators relieved some of the stress endured in their teaching career. As the beginning teachers sought guidance from seasoned teachers, the mentee-mentor relationship grew. The developing teachers stated that the feedback received from their observations was an invaluable tool used as sources of information regarding resolving problems related to more effective teaching strategies and increasing rigor in the classroom. They suggested the work environment was positive and made them feel comfortable to seek guidance from majority of their coworkers.

Although the beginning teachers felt that overall, the program was beneficial, they had some suggestions of improvement. The biggest sense of frustration with the program came from the lack of time available for participating in the program. All of the beginning teacher reiterated that they needed an additional time during the school operating hours with their mentors. They stated that their mentors were willing to help them anytime afterschool, however they needed them the most during school. Another recommendation was making sure that all new teachers were invited into the program. Brenton was inducted into the program during his second year because he was overlooked. He indicated that the lack of support during his first year magnified the challenges he faced his first year and being a part of a community that supported beginning teacher would have been valuable.

### **Research Question Two**

How do mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators support beginning teachers? Research question two investigated how the leadership team perceived their role in the induction program embraced the development of beginning teachers. Harrison, an assistant principal, believe his purpose was to be seen as another mentor for beginning teachers and not an evaluator that comes into their room and tell them what they are doing wrong. Harrison also implied that the administrators held high expectations for the program and implemented policies that formed accountability and provision. The administrators ensured both the mentors and the novice teachers taught the same subject and have the same planning period so they are able to lesson plan together and meet daily. The principal also noted that the novice teacher's classroom was in a close proximity to his or her mentor teacher.

During the interview, Grace, the program coordinator, described her role as the central contact for the campus's teacher induction program, that paired mentees and mentors, hosted



meetings, provided feedback from observations, and answered questions. She also specified her role has taught her that she must show compassion and be patient with learning educators. Additionally, Grace reported weekly to the administrators to provide an update of the program. The mentors, (Devin, Elizabeth, and Faith), believed that their role was to give their mentees proven strategies to become effective teachers. This was accomplished by providing emotional, social, and physical support such as listening to their mentees vent about their frustrations, motivating to keep going, checking on them regularly, and providing resources and feedback from random classroom observations. They also indicated that they modeled classroom procedures and lessons.

The leadership team, (administrators, program coordinator, and mentors), had some recommendations for the teacher induction program as well. Some of the suggestions were similar to the beginning teacher such as building more time during school hour to support beginning teachers. The mentors felt it was important to have the same planning period as their mentees, but did not like having to use all of their personal planning time to meet with their mentor teacher. Also, the team agreed completing a survey or inventory of the faculty members on campus would make sure that all beginning teachers are inducted into the program. Another suggestion was giving the program coordinator an assistant to help with the daily demands of operating the program. Grace implied the program's effectiveness was compromised because she had other obligations on campus. She believed the induction program could be more impactful with additional support.

### **Research Question Three**

How does the teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers? Research question three examined the impact of participating in an induction program

in Louisiana on beginning teachers. The researcher was looking at how the teacher induction program specifically impacted beginning teacher's self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement.

During the interviews the mentors stated that they engaged fresh teachers in activities that built their self-efficacy. The responses indicated that the most common way mentors built new teacher self-efficacy was through comments that impacted the physiological and affective state mind of the new teachers. The beginning teachers recalled how observing their mentors model strategies made them comfortable to try them in their own classrooms. As the teachers began to enhance their teaching skills their confidence in teaching their students increased.

The responses from the interviews revealed that the beginning teachers endured some challenges that initially effected their job satisfaction. All the beginning teachers reported that they believe that they are satisfied with teaching students because of the support they received in the induction program. Additionally, being involved in a community that allowed them to shared their frustrations and receive advice made them feel secure.

According to the participants all of the beginning teachers will be returning to teaching the following school year. The participants believed this was a result of providing sufficient guidance to new employees and making the work environment inviting. Furthermore, the beginning teachers highlighted the fact that their colleagues were very knowledgeable and willing to share resources. One novice teacher reported he was returning because she felt like he was a part of a family.

Data revealed that mentors were the most influential component of the teacher induction program. It is evident that mentors had prior teaching experience within the same subject as their mentees because many of the questions that beginning teachers had was related to curriculum

and instruction. Additionally, the availability of these mentors was crucial for beginning teachers. All mentees testified gaining new skills from the conversations and feedback their mentors provided which was then transferable to their classroom.

Some new teachers recalled how the program impacted their student's learning. It was suggested that the professional development the beginning teachers received helped increase their student achievement. It was not stated what evidence they had for student growth or how beginning teacher's student growth compared to seasoned teacher's student growth. Nonetheless, the leadership team stated that as the beginning teacher continue to grow, in tandem, their students' success will grow as well.

### **Summary**

Chapter Four reported the findings of this single case study. The findings of the data collection and analysis addressed the research questions: What are the perceptions of beginning teachers about the teacher induction program? How do mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators support beginning teachers? How does the teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers? After the educators were referred, they were contacted to request their participation. One-on-one interviews via zoom were arranged, and interviews were conducted, video/audio-taped, and transcribed. Stories were written from the transcriptions, and interviews were coded to determine themes of the ways in which the teacher induction program supported the development of beginning teachers.

Three significant themes emerged from this analysis: (a) understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development, (b) creating a community for beginning teacher's development, and (c) influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development. From the themes, the research questions were answered. Based on the data, educators participating in the teacher induction program concluded the program is one of quality, but participants offered

specific areas for improvements. The results of the study provided critical new information to district stakeholders, researchers, and practitioners in the area of teacher development.

In Chapter Five, I offered a discussion of the single case study. Specifically, limitations and delimitations of the study, the discussion included the study's findings, implications for practice, as well as potential future research ideas in the area of induction. Finally, I summarized the scope of the qualitative single case study.

## **CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of Chapter Five was to provide a discussion that connect the literature review with the study's findings. Thus, through data collection and analysis the findings highlighted the viewpoints of educators participating in a teacher induction program in Louisiana and determined the impact of the induction program on teacher development. First, this chapter began with the description of the study's limitations and delimitations. Second, the researcher provided a discussion of the findings reported in Chapter Four. Third, a discourse on implications for practice based on this study's findings is included. Fourth, a written dialogue on possible future research was presented. Finally, the chapter concluded with a summary of the research study.

### **Limitations**

There were several limitations of this study since the aim was focused specifically on the understanding of educators' perception of a teacher induction program in Louisiana and the impact of the program on beginning teachers. Regardless of how much the researcher attempted to remove herself from the study, the representation of the data probably cognitively included biases. Another limitation of this study, was the lack of time to conduct this study. Case studies generally require an extended stay in the field (Creswell, 2018). However, being on the inside as an educator, as a moderate participant observer as per Spradley (2016) provided the researcher the opportunity to gain an extensive understanding of the participant's discernment of participating in the teacher induction program. Another limitation was the impact of COVID-19 on collecting data from participants. Face-to-face interviews were preferred but due to health restrictions the interviews were conducted on Zoom.

## **Delimitations**

There were several choices that the researcher made in the design of the research that impacted the findings of the study. Participation in the study will be limited to the group of high school educators that are currently participating in the teacher induction program. Despite the fact that other educators in the school district have been through the program, the focus of this study was on the most recent participants in the program. The reason that the researcher decided to limit the study in this fashion was that the researcher wanted to evaluate the program that most represents the current trend of the program. Past participants in the program had specific components that were different in their program since the program has evolved over time.

Another choice the researcher made was limiting the study to one school. The choice was made to focus on a single school in a populous school district in Louisiana. Also, limiting the setting allowed the researcher to collect, analyze, and answer the research questions in a timely manner. It was also convenient for the researcher to gather information in the selected school and school district. No observations of classrooms were used and no student performance data were a part of the research. Due to time constraints, conducting the study over the summer break, and COVID-19 health restrictions observations were not obtained. Additionally, the researcher wanted to avoid educators feeling threatened by the research findings to be connected back to them. However, the researcher was able to obtain additional sources of data through artifacts and documents from the participants and a reflective notebook kept by the researcher.

## **Discussion of Findings**

Training beginning teachers is multi-dimensional. State and district policies, challenges of beginning teachers, role of administrators, role of program coordinators, role of mentors, and other colleagues affected this school's teacher induction program. As the data only pertains to a select number of educators in a single school, it is critical to realize this research was not

intended to generalize all teacher induction programs from this study to solving numerous problems, rather, this study will allow an in-depth investigation of one setting and context (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). And while results may not be generalizable to similar situations and environments, results are still timely and germane to induction. According to Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba (2008), constructivist inquiry is not intended for immediate change as much it is meant to lead to “intellectual digestion” (p. 112). Instead, the aim of this research was to improve teacher education, especially for beginning teachers, through personal reflections by examining a single setting. A constructivist point of view was ideally suited to address this issue because it is intended to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

The present single case study emerged common patterns during the coding process that led to the formation of three major themes: (a) understanding the experiences of beginning teacher’s development, (b) creating a community for beginning teacher’s development, and (c) influencing the progression of beginning teacher’s development. While intellectual attributes were recognized, sentimental attributes and professional dispositions appeared to be more abundant from the perspectives of the participants. The themes reflected in the findings demonstrated a relationship between participants perspectives on what attributes influence the teaching and learning process, and also how the district’s induction program influenced beginning teachers’ attributes and dispositions. Although the participants agreed that the teacher induction program positively impacted beginning teacher’s professional growth, they also shared recommendations for the program in order to effectively support future inductees. Each dimension of the district’s induction program was discussed and the findings were aligned with the literature.

This school district's mentoring program was aligned with state policy and have the following goals: (a) to integrate new teachers into the culture and climate of our schools and our school district; (b) to assist beginning teachers in managing the challenges that are common to all teachers; (c) to enhance our teachers through professional learning and reflection on their practice and on student learning; (d) to increase and improve the recruitment, retention, & success of beginning teachers; (e) to encourage teacher leadership in the district; (f) to successfully meet the qualities of the Louisiana Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric (COMPASS) and improve teaching performance and enhance student achievement. Research suggests that some novice teachers might not be assigned mentors due to lack of a match by subject area and grade level (Billingsley, Griffin, Smith, Kamman, & Israel, 2009). That was not the circumstance for this particular school. In view of this school district's teacher induction program policy, participants confirmed that the school site had a two-year induction program, whereby new teachers were matched with mentors based on subject area. The study also revealed that the some of the administrators and mentors were not provided training before participating in the induction program and used their own experiences as a neophyte teacher to support their mentees. The participants suggested that although their experiences were beneficial to supporting mentee teachers, they wished they had some form of training prior to participating in the program. This suggest that the district's induction program must allocate funding and time to provide effective training to personnel responsible for training green teachers.

The rookie teachers realized they had gaps in their preservice training due to receiving an alternative teaching certification. Billingsley et al. (2009) found that novice teachers battled with assimilating in a new work environment, finding instructional materials, lesson planning, teaching diverse students, and classroom management, which left them feeling isolated and



anxious. The findings of the present study agreed with recent research to a certain degree. The fresh teachers agreed that they found certain teaching responsibilities challenging and left some participants feeling anxious and insecure of their teaching ability. These participants believed that the caseload, lack of teaching experience, and insufficient time to complete daily task contributed to feeling overwhelmed. However, participants knew whom to contact when issues arose. Furthermore, they did not seem reluctant to ask for assistance from their new colleagues. To the induction program credit, the mentee teachers were assigned a mentor during school and after hours to address these issues. Additionally, the leadership team played a strategic role in the support of beginning teachers.

The administrators played a strategic role in the support of new teachers. Henley et al. (2010) suggested that as teachers interact with their colleagues, a deeper sense of community and purpose evolves. Administrators supported novice teachers by treating them like family and encouraging teamwork. According to the participants, the administrators often led afterschool faculty functions (e.g. holiday parties and birthday celebrations) where the staff was able to mingle with each other and bond not just on a collegiate level, but as a work family. Leko and Smith (2010) insisted that administrators, who possess a high degree of emotional intelligence, will implement an inclusive work environment. Likewise, the participants agreed that the administrators established a school wide culture of teamwork. The findings suggested that on-the-job training was provided to some inexperienced teachers such that they were given the opportunity to attend workshops and observe effective teachers. The administrators believed that beginning teachers should be exposed to a variety of methods of delivery, however time and other factors made this extremely hard to accomplish. Nonetheless, the role of an administrator was filled with additional challenges in supporting new hires. As stated previously, novice

teachers were overwhelmed with caseload and paperwork which prevented the participants from co-planning during school hours. Due to lack of faculty members and funding, the administrators found it difficult to lessen the workload of mentee teachers. Another challenge that was mentioned was the ability to provide specific professional development for new teachers. On professional development days, novice teachers were receiving the same information in the same manner as veteran teachers. The administrators noted that this often resulted in new teachers becoming overwhelmed with new information. However, due to time constraints and needing to deliver important information to all faculty and staff, whole group meetings were convenient and expeditious. This suggest that the administrators should follow up with beginning teachers after each professional development to ensure that beginning teachers were receptive to the new information. Additionally, administration needs to carve out time for individual meetings and feedback when needed.

The program coordinator was the key player who kept the induction program running. The most prominent task was selecting veteran teachers to mentor beginning teachers. The administrators gave the coordinator autonomy to assign partnerships as she sees fit. The coordinator outlined her rationale for each collaboration by evaluating each participant's personality, but most importantly the content area they are certified to teach. According, to the coordinator it was important that the mentor and mentee worked well together and that their personalities did not clash. It was also noted that mismatched pairing rarely occurred, but in the event that it did, she quickly resolved the issue. Resolution was done by meeting with the pair to determine if they could amend the fractured relationship. If the amendment did not occur then the coordinator would terminate the mentoring relationship and pair the mentee with a new mentor. The coordinator emphasized that the purpose of mentoring was to nurture beginning

teachers and reproduce the inclusive work environment culture. Moreover, the coordinator fielded questions, facilitated the monthly meetings for neophyte teachers and mentors, maintained the district's induction program handbook. Time was the biggest encounter the coordinator had to overcome. She disclosed that being a coordinator was not her only role on campus and often times she could not fully implement the program due to time constraints. She suggested having additional support such as an assist would alleviate some of the burden of having multiple roles on campus. This suggest that the school is lean on staff and may need to evaluate how roles are distributed. This would allow faculty members not to feel overloaded by sharing major responsibilities throughout the school.

Gallagher, Abbott-Shim, and VandeWiele (2011) described mentors as veteran teachers who formed partnerships with mentees to acquire and apply newly acquired knowledge. Mentors are personnel that have a history of displaying best teaching practices with lead to greater student achievement. The findings revealed that the mentors reflected on their experiences as first couple of years as teachers and wanted better experiences for their mentees. The mentors were in close proximity and met with them frequently to provide emotional, social, and physical support. When time permitted, mentors divulged that they observed their mentees. Observations were key for mentors to determine what skills their mentees excelled at and what skills they needed to enhanced. Additionally, mentors allowed their mentees to observe them to model best teaching practices. Afterwards the mentors and mentees would meet up, usually afterschool, to reflect on the classroom observations. The reflection was not only insightful to the beginning teachers but to the veteran teachers. The informal meetings allowed the mentors to reflect on ways of how they can become better teachers for their students. Mentors also mentioned ways they reduced a stressful work environment by being available, giving resources and advice, and providing

affirmation to their mentees. These supportive strategies improved the new teacher's self-efficacy and commitment to profession. Like the other participants, the mentors declared that lack of time prevented them to support their mentees in the manner that they envisioned. Often times their mentees needed them when they were engaged with their own students. This made it difficult to answer questions and burn out fires when the learning teachers needed it the most. The mentors and mentees were given a common planning period, however, the mentors indicated that they needed time to handle their own professional responsibilities. This suggest that the mentors had imbalanced prep time for their mentees and themselves and additional planning period is necessary to accomplish daily task. The findings also publicized that some of the colleagues informally mentored beginning teachers and assumed some of the responsibility of mentors. This was done intentionally to ensure an inclusive work environment where teachers felt comfortable working together.

### **Study Impact**

This study contributed to the literature by providing a direct comparison of the experiences of participants in using a single case study design. The major findings were that educators had a shared language as they described their experiences in the district's teacher induction program. Not all teacher induction programs are of the same quality. This school district's teacher induction program was compared to the literature. Comprehensive teacher induction programs (a) train and develop mentors and mentees, (b) pair mentors and mentees with the same certification and school, (c) allow for common planning time, (d) provide time for mentors and mentees to observe each other, (e) reduce workload of mentors and mentees, (f) engage a broad network of teachers, (g) assess mentees using formal standards, and (h) provide mentoring beyond three years (Andrews, Gilbert, & Martin, 2007; Barrera, Braley, & Slate,

2010; Washburn-Moses, 2010). The aforementioned attributes were evident in the school district's induction program for beginning teachers except for training mentors and administrators, reduced workload for both mentors and mentees, and mentoring support beyond three years. This suggests that the school district may have a shortage of staff and lack of funds to fully implement all of the major component of a teacher induction program. In view of the literature, the school district's teacher induction program has the potential to improve, which will likely have a positive effect on beginning teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, commitment to the profession, teaching competency, and student achievement.

### **Implications for Practice**

Implications from this study were especially germane to the site (school) where participants worked, however, similar schools and /or new teachers, inductions coordinators, veteran teachers, and school-level administrators in other settings may glean much from this study. The implications for practice within a teacher induction program presented a variety of issues that can affect a school district. This study provided insight for the professional needs of beginning teachers. The data – interviews, site document, and researcher's reflective notebook in this study – and subsequent analysis, provided support for positive social and professional change in high schools, as well as school districts, as increasing numbers of new teacher, individuals enter high schools with no preservice training (EG alternative certification programs such as Teach for America). Additionally, the study provided a framework for leadership capacity that will assist high school principals, district administrators, college professors, and state department of education specialists to improve the transitions of alternatively certified beginning teachers. The research findings guided the study's implications for high school leadership teams and school districts in the local setting charged with the responsibility of improving beginning teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teaching competency,

and student achievement. Based on the data, an effective teacher induction program should consist of several components of support based on the perceptions of this single case study's participants. These components translate into teachers believing they can be successful in the profession; consequently, they are more likely to remain in profession. Some of those have already been discussed in Chapter Four under the Themes section and the Interpretation of the Findings section. A fuller discussion follows.

This single case study also served as evidence that there is a need for additional state funds to support a mandated teacher induction program. School districts cannot rely solely on Title II funds or local funds to meet the needs of novice teachers. There must be support provided from the state level to assist school districts that are not able to employ a comprehensive teacher induction program. A financial collaboration among the state department of education, school districts, and high schools, may allow the stakeholder responsible for designing and implementing a teacher induction program to enhance beginning teacher's professional development needs. The allocation funds may contribute to implementing training for the leadership team, preparation time for the leadership team to support new teachers, stipends for mentors, orientation for beginning teachers, and substitutes teachers for novice teachers to attend workshops or conferences. These expenses could prove to be a valuable asset to the schools if the funds are appropriately allocated for a front-end approach to teacher induction programs.

Teacher induction programs should be comprised of a leadership team that includes administrators, program coordinator, instructional coaches, and mentors. These personnel have had proven success in the classroom and are committed to mentoring beginning teachers. The leadership team must be able to show high emotional intelligence to provide the social and

emotional support beginning teachers need. This may help green teachers feel welcomed to teach in the new work environment and also feel comfortable to ask for assistance. It is also important to note that the leadership team should plan ahead, a calendar with events related to the induction program should be available to all faculty members. The calendar should also leave room for flexibility to account for unexpected concerns or opportunities for new hires. A flexible calendar may ensure that as the school year unfolds, the teacher induction program tailor its actions to meet the individual needs of new teachers. Administrators should try to utilize as many faculty members as possible to share responsibilities in the program to ensure that the leadership team are not overwhelmed with multiple obligations. Before the leadership team interacts with beginning teachers, they need to undergo a formal training. During this training, all expectations need to be addressed in addition to plans on how to best support mentee teachers. The site coordinators should strive to employ all of the components of a comprehensive teacher induction program and discuss the how the components will be implemented during the trainings. Trainings may also occur throughout the school year, as specific novice teacher's professional development needs emerge.

As an important consideration, there is limited knowledge of how induction program supports the needs of alternatively certified secondary education teachers. Typically, secondary school alternatively certified teachers do not participate in research studies as a special subgroup of the education population. The professional development needs of this unique group of teachers are significant to the education society to ensure the quality of their instruction as well as the quality of the professional support they receive (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). Contingent on the alternative certification program, many new teachers lack the field experience or college coursework typically completed in traditional university education program to prepare teacher

(Steadman & Simmons, 2007). Simmons (2005) contends that because new alternatively certified teachers assume dual roles as teachers and students, they tend focus on daily survival of their needs instead of the needs of the students. Therefore, school districts and school administrators should provide supplemental professional support and development to this specialty class of secondary education teachers as they assimilate into their new careers as classroom teachers. The differentiated professional support mediates the effects of a beginning teacher's lack of student teaching experience, which will surely help the teacher's self-efficacy, job satisfaction, intent to remain in education, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement (Connelly & Graham, 2009; Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2011).

After novice teachers have been hired, they need to become acquainted with the way their new school does things. Administrators and site coordinators can help meet this need by sponsoring an orientation at the opening of the school year to review key policies and procedures. The leadership team can also help the new teachers obtain needed resources and supplies. Due to the fact that the beginning of the school year may be overwhelming for many starting teachers, they should be given additional contract days before school starts to prepare for the upcoming school year. The additional days would be utilized to prepare classrooms, plan for the first day of school, and additional job-shadowing activities. This extra contracted employment time allows greenhorn teachers to focus only on effectively teaching students at the beginning of school rather than feeling divided between how to plan lessons and prepare the classroom in a very short amount of time. Likewise, mentees and mentors should meet during the summer prior to the school year to form a positive mentor-mentee relationship. According to Kram (1985) mentor-mentee relationships takes time and effort from both parties. As stated previously, time is a challenge for all participants in the teacher induction program, throughout



the school year, both mentor and mentee may be too busy with daily task to establish a mentoring relationship. Therefore, getting an early start to build trust, will ensure that the bond will be beneficial to both educators.

District leaders and administrators could evaluate and redesign the use of time and school schedules to reduce the course load for the site coordinators, mentors, and beginning teachers. This transition may increase opportunities for professional learning and collaboration, including participation in professional learning communities, peer coaching and observations across classrooms, and collaborative planning. Additionally, most mentors are teachers and are teaching a full course load. Therefore, mentors need time to work with their mentees and work on other responsibilities. This suggests that, trainee teachers and mentors also need two common planning periods, whereby one is dedicated solely to the teacher induction program. The shared time allows neophyte teachers to meet with more experienced teachers to learn the art of teaching. Common planning time enables teachers to meet and collaborate on important work and decision making about students, curriculum, and instruction. For many schools, this occurs through professional learning communities (PLCs) when groups of educators collaborate to plan, implement, reflect on, and modify instruction as they strive to help students learn. Productive collaborative planning may be when educators sit down to map out unit plans together, pulling the best resources from each other's files and talking through what worked or did not work previously. Such collaborations can be quite useful to beginning teachers as they do not have any past teaching experience to rely on to predict what their students may excel or struggle with. Hence, apprentice teachers and their mentors need to be matched carefully so that they teach the same subject, and if possible, the same specific course, such as Algebra I, Civics, English III, Physics, etc. This matching method involves front-end planning by the administrators ensuring

that greenhorn teachers can have an effective relationship with their mentors. Thus, mentors need to be able to relate with their rookie teachers about the exact same course as well as about students' demographics. This is a parallel finding in much of the teacher mentoring literature as well. Referred to as matching and selection (Ambrosetti, 2014; DePaul, 2000; Huling-Austin, 1992; Kilburg, 2002; Newton et al., 1994), this consideration is paramount.

Likewise, administrators need to ensure that learning teachers' and mentors' classrooms are in close proximity to each other. Arranging the classrooms to be in the same building or area can enable the novice teacher to quickly get help if a situation arises. However, mentors would have to ensure that they do not become crutches to novice teachers as needing to build their teaching skills.

An effective teacher induction program does not just rely on the program coordinator and mentors to guide new employees. One of the administrator's task is to create a school culture where it is everyone is encouraged to support beginning teacher the best way they can. Effective administrators understand that teams of people who share the same goals will be more successful than the leadership team working alone. Therefore, administrators share leadership roles with staff at all levels of the organization. To accomplish an inclusive work environment, administrators must be intentional and strategically implement the following. The principal must clearly and explicitly state the vision and rationale for an inclusive work environment in a formal meeting to all faculty and staff. The vision from the principal will allow all teachers to understand what is expected of them. Beyond the vision of an inclusive school environment, school personnel need the skills to do things differently. The administrators should create time for teams to determine how to work collaboratively to draw upon the specialized knowledge and strategies that different members of the educational team bring to the learning environment. Once special

skills and PLCs agendas have been developed teachers can regularly meet to plan and teach together. Incentives may be utilized to support all stakeholders in this process through the change process. For educators, incentives may be resources (e.g., access to people who have skill in inclusive practices to provide on-site support), material (e.g., curricular materials that allow for differentiation in skills and interests) or organizational (e.g., shared planning time for grade level or content area teams) (Boyd, et al., 2009) The work environment needs to be inviting and collaborative where the administrators are routinely visible and involved at the ground level with students, teachers, parents, and community members to address issues confronting their school. It is also wise for the administrators to initiate group activities frequently such as team building exercises and social gatherings. These work environment norms may make newcomers to feel more comfortable as they assimilate into the work place.

In the beginning of novice teachers' careers, most of their challenges are related to curriculum and instruction and along with classroom management. Content knowledge are the facts, concepts, theories, and principles that teachers need to know to effective in their content area. Teachers' knowledge of content and students (and lack thereof) greatly influenced how they broke down facts, concepts, theories, and principles for student understanding. The leadership team must voice to beginning teachers that knowing the content is critical to the advancement of their students. The inexperienced teachers should be given resources such as websites, teacher manuals, shared lesson plans, opportunities to collaborate with other teachers teaching the same course, and ability to attend workshops designated for their content area. Content knowledge must be balanced with a solid foundation in effective teaching strategies. Pedagogical content knowledge is when the teacher selects strategies to match their students' needs. Effective teachers exhibit a wide range of skills and abilities that lead to producing a

conducive learning environment. Mentee teachers often need support from their mentors to find resources to meet their students' needs. The leadership team should host professional development trainings specifically for new hires. The trainings can be a combination of on-the-job trainings and after-school meetings that allowed the beginning teachers to learn about the wide variety of instructional methods, experiences, assignments, and materials to ensure that learners are achieving all sorts of cognitive objectives.

As discussed earlier, classroom management, however, is a common concern expressed by most fresh teachers. Effective teaching and learning cannot happen if classrooms are poorly managed (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Classroom disruptions may be caused by power struggles between the new educator and students. As educators whom experienced the trials of being beginning teachers, the leadership team should share strategies on how to build and maintain a positive learning environment. One strategy may be establishing trust, which can be difficult for such students, but can lead to major benefits. Second, taking the time to talk to students, which might be unsuccessful at times, but each attempt is a worthy opportunity at relationship building. Third, being close proximity sends the message that teachers are not intimidated and are available to students. Fourth, celebrating successes to build positive energy in the classroom setting. Fifth, building a positive rapport with parents. Sixth, making positive phone calls throughout the year. Lastly, when dealing with difficult students, educators need to be flexible and able to differentiate instruction to fit the students' specific needs.

The state, school districts, and schools could regularly conduct needs assessments using data from staff surveys to identify areas of professional learning most needed and desired by beginning educators. Findings from these sources can aid in ensuring that professional learning is not disconnected from practice and supports the areas of knowledge and skills new educators

want to develop. Knowing what specific attributes are seen as effective from the perspectives of greenhorn teachers also provides the leadership team with the necessary information to improve the teacher induction program. When all stakeholders possess the same vision of what constitutes as an effective teacher induction program, it may be easier for teachers to stay in the profession, meet high expectations, and positively impact student achievement. More studies on teacher induction programs in Louisiana will continue to deepen the understanding of what is needed in beginning teacher's professional growth to make the largest impact on the teaching and learning process. Future research is essential to provide more insight to this finding.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Recommendations for future research were harvested from the study's findings, limitations, and delimitations. The research conducted for this study contributes to the body of research on the impact of teacher induction programs. It is the researcher's hope that this study will initiate ideas for future research to improve the professional development of new teachers.

First, this study could also be replicated with different means of data collection. The researcher can follow greenhorn teachers, mentors, coordinators, and administrators throughout the year. The study will allow the researcher to learn through observation about the positive and negative attributes of an induction program from within.

Second, a study could be conducted with additional schools. In this study the researcher will measure the differences between the perspectives of beginning teachers from schools with a high-performance score versus schools with a low-performance score. Likewise, a study that compares beginning teachers from rural, suburban, and urban school districts will be a great addition to this present study. Another study could be looking at the differences and similarities between public schools, private schools, and public charter schools, especially in the setting of South Louisiana where charter school and private (parochial) school proliferate. Comparing

teacher induction programs based on the types of funding awarded and the amount is also worthy to explore. It is very possible for the researcher to find discrepancies in beginning teachers' efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, effectiveness, and student achievement.

Third, involves a study with various demographics of novice teachers. This study will lead to comparing the preparedness between novice teachers from traditional college teacher preparation programs and alternative certification programs. The researcher will likely discover that novice teachers from alternative certification programs have different needs than novice teachers from traditional college programs during the first year of teaching.

Fourth, explores a longitudinal study of beginning teachers with an alternative teacher certification and a traditional teacher certification. The study may span over a 10-year period. The purpose of this study will be to explore the effects of teacher certification programs on a teacher's self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, effectiveness, and student achievement. The findings may yield mixed results, there might be a significant difference between the two types of certification programs for certain aspects of teaching and little to none for other aspects of teaching. The nature of the study will be critical for ensuring high quality teacher preparation programs.

Fifth, the school might want to utilize information from this study to develop a future program evaluation study. A program evaluation study could be implemented within 10 years. Based on the evaluation findings, the researcher can lay out exactly what is benefiting the new teachers and what is not benefiting the new teachers. Longitudinally, studying such a program would likely be beneficial to any district.

## Summary

The theory behind induction programs for new teachers rest on that effective teaching is complex, teacher preparation programs are rarely sufficient in providing all the knowledge and skill necessary to successfully teach, and a significant portion of this knowledge can be acquired only on the job (Van Zandt Allen, 2013). This notion holds that schools must provide an environment where novice teachers can learn how to teach, feel satisfied in the profession, stay in the profession, and positively impact student's learning. Although these programs aim to improve the performance of new hires, some school districts have yet to create a program to provide such support (Martin & Mulvihill, 2017). Therefore, this study was conducted on the basis of understanding the positions of educators participating in a teacher induction program in Louisiana and determined the impact of the induction program on teacher development.

The primary focus of this literature review was to explore the phenomenon of education and development of new teachers. After a thorough review of the literature and the results of this study, it is clear that there are induction programs that contribute to the success of new teachers. It is also evident that teachers who do not receive guidance, encouragement, and motivation in the first years are more likely to leave the profession. While a "one-size-fits-all" mindset towards induction programs would not be sufficient, there are certain aspects that every program could and should share. The best induction programs "allow teachers to observe others, to be observed by others, and to be part of groups in which teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect one another's work" (Wong, 2002, p. 53). The literature review also revealed that more studies are necessary to determine the current impact of teacher induction programs.

To provide additional information on the impact of teacher induction programs the researcher followed a detailed plan. The addressed three research questions: What are the

perceptions of beginning teachers about the teacher induction program? How do mentors, teacher induction program coordinators, and administrators support beginning teachers? How does the teacher induction program impact professional development for beginning teachers? To best answer these questions a single case study was employed. Each of the research questions was answered through the themes obtained following the qualitative content analysis. There were three significant findings that emerged from the study: (a) understanding the experiences of beginning teacher's development, (b) creating a community for beginning teacher's development, and (c) influencing the progression of beginning teacher's development. The findings were based on the data and were meant to inform the district leaders and school administrators of current perceptions from a single site. Furthermore, the single case study provided insight for future improvements of this dynamic program. Thus, if new teachers are to become skilled professionals, stakeholders need to take action to expand and improve the creation, implementation, and evaluation of teacher induction programs.



## **APPENDIX A: CRITERION SURVEY**

To participate in the study, please answer the following questions by highlighting your response. Type your name and date the form. Please email the survey to Lorita Eichelberger at leiche7@lsu.edu at your earliest convenience.

Question 1. Are you a beginning teacher with five or fewer years of experience? Yes or No

Question 2. Are you high school teacher? Yes or No

Question 3. Are you a teacher currently participating in an induction program or have participated in an induction program within the last five years? Yes or No

Question 4. Do you teach full or part time in the school district? Yes or No

Question 5. Are you a mentor, induction program coordinator, or principal, who provides support to high school beginning teachers? Yes or No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL



### ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

**TO:** Margaret Mary Sulentic-Dowell  
ELRC

**FROM:** Alex Cohen  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

**DATE:** June 22, 2020

**RE:** IRB# E12326

**TITLE:** Multiple Case Study: The Impact of Louisiana's Induction Programs on Beginning Teachers

Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Alex Cohen, Chair  
130 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
F: 225.578.5983  
[irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu)  
[lsu.edu/research](http://lsu.edu/research)

**New Protocol/Modification/Continuation:** New Protocol

**Review Date:** 6/19/2020

**Approved** X **Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval Date:** 6/22/2020 **Approval Expiration Date:** 6/21/2023

**Exemption Category/Paragraph:** 2b

**Signed Consent Waived?:** No

**Re-review frequency:** Three Years

**LSU Proposal Number** (if applicable):

**By:** Alex Cohen, Chairman 

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –

#### Continuing approval is **CONDITIONAL** on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE:** When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.

\* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/research>

**Date:** 19-Oct-2020  
**To:** Sulentic Dowell, Margaret-Mary  
 LSUAM | Col of HSE | Education  
**From:** Alex Cohen  
 Associate Chairman, Institutional Review Board  
**Re:** IRB # E12326  
**Title:** A Single Case Study on the Impact of  
 Louisiana's Induction Program on High School  
 Beginning Teachers  
**Submission Type:** Transitional Amendment  
**Brief Modification Description:** XXXXX  
**Review Type:** Exempt Review  
**Review Date:** 19-Oct-2020  
**Risk Level:** Minimal  
**Status:** Approved  
**Approval Date:** 19-Oct-2020  
**Approval Expiration Date:** 21-Jun-2023  
**LSU Proposal Number:**  
 (if applicable)



**By:**  
 Alex Cohen, Associate Chairman

**Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:**

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
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*\* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/research>*

Louisiana State University  
 131 David Boyd Hall  
 Baton Rouge, LA 70803

O 225-578-5833  
 F 225-578-5983  
<http://www.lsu.edu/research>

## **APPENDIX C: EMAIL TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS**

Dear Fellow Educators,

This letter is written to request permission to interview you (via Zoom due to COVID-19) regarding your participation in the Louisiana's **B**eginning **E**ducator **S**uccess **T**rack (B.E.S.T) program (teacher induction program).

I am a doctoral student at LSU (Baton Rouge) pursuing a Ph.D. in P-12 Educational Leadership. I have chosen the topic of "teacher induction," which is the ongoing attention and support that provides services to help meet the needs of beginning teachers.

The purpose of this single case study is to compare the experiences of educators participating in a teacher induction program in Louisiana and examine the impact of the induction program on teacher development.

To participate in the study, you must meet the following requirements: (a) beginning teacher with less than five years of teaching experience and participating in the B.E.S.T program; or (b) mentor, B.E.S.T program coordinator, or administrator, who provides support to beginning teachers.

Your cooperation is most essential if this study is to be successful. All information will be strictly confidential. The name of the school district, the name of your school, and your name will NOT be associated with any responses. The anonymity of all persons involved will be preserved by using pseudonyms.

Your immediate attention to being interviewed is truly appreciated, and thanks in advance for your assistance. Attached is the participants criteria survey and consent form. Please email the signed consent form to [leiche7@lsu.edu](mailto:leiche7@lsu.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call, text, or email me. Thank you in advanced.

Sincerely,

Lorita Eichelberger  
Louisiana State University  
P-12 Education Leadership PhD student  
[leiche7@lsu.edu](mailto:leiche7@lsu.edu)  
225-276-5885

## APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

1. Title: A Single Case Study on the Impact of Louisiana's Induction Programs on High School Beginning Teachers
2. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this single case study is to compare the experiences of educators participating in a teacher induction program in Louisiana and examine the impact of the induction program on teacher development and student achievement. In this study the subjects will be interviewed for about approximately 30 minutes about their experience as an educator and their perspective of the teacher induction program in Louisiana.
3. Risks: The only study risk is the inadvertent release of sensitive information found in the questionnaire. However, every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. Files will be kept in secure cabinets to which only the investigator has access.
4. Benefits: The study may yield valuable information about the impact of teacher preparation programs.
5. Investigators: The following investigator is available for questions about this study,  
Thursday, 3:00p – 4:15p  
Dr. Margaret-Mary Sulentic Dowell  
[sdowell@lsu.edu](mailto:sdowell@lsu.edu)  
  
Monday – Friday, 2:45p – 4:30p  
Lorita Eichelberger  
[leiche7@lsu.edu](mailto:leiche7@lsu.edu)  
225-276-5885
6. Performance Sites:  
Riverdale High School (a pseudonym)
7. Number of Participants: 8
8. Inclusion Criteria: High school educators (beginning teachers, mentors of beginning teachers, induction program coordinators, administrators) participating in Louisiana's Teacher Induction Program who do not report psychological or neurological conditions.
9. Exclusion Criteria: Teachers who have taught more than five years, NOT a mentor of beginning teachers, NOT a teacher induction coordinator, or NOT an administrator. Educators not employed at a high school. Additionally, educators who is not employed by East Baton Rouge Parish School System.

10. Right to Refuse: Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.
11. Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Subject identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.
12. Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigators. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Alex Cohen, Institutional Review Board (225) 578-8692, [irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu), [www.lsu.edu/irb](http://www.lsu.edu/irb). I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The study participant has indicated to me that he/she is unable to read. I certify that I have read this consent form to the subject and explained that by completing the signature line above, the participant has agreed to participate.

Signature of Reader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information or identifiable bio-specimens. After removal, the information or bio-specimens may be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent.

Yes, I give permission \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

No, I do not give permission \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## **APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS**

1. What is your age, ethnicity, education level, and teaching position?
2. What does it mean to be a beginning teacher?
3. How would you describe the school environment in which you work?
4. What are the challenges of your first year as a beginning teacher?
5. To what extent did participating in the teacher induction program help cope with the challenges?
6. Please describe the structure of the induction program.
7. Were you assigned a mentor?
8. How was the mentor matched or paired with you?
9. How do you and your mentor communicate?
10. How does mentor, coordinator, and administrator support your needs as a beginning teacher?
11. Besides mentoring and professional development, what other components in the teacher induction program have helped you improve as a teacher?
12. How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your confidence in being an effective faculty member here?
13. To what extent do you feel satisfied as a teacher participating in the new teacher induction program?
14. How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your decision to remain teaching next school year?
15. In what way(s) did you grow professionally this year due to being a part of the teacher induction program?
16. How much of an impact did the teacher induction program have on your students' achievement?
17. What improvements could be made to the induction program and your role?
18. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as a beginning teacher?

## **APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS**

1. What is your age, ethnicity, education level, and teaching position?
2. Describe your experience as a beginning teacher?
3. Did you participant in a teacher induction program? If so, how did it impact your teaching career?
4. What does it mean to be a mentor of a beginning teacher?
5. How long have you been a mentor?
6. What type of training or support was provided to you in order for you to effectively mentor beginning teachers?
7. How were you paired with your mentee(s)?
8. Describe the mentor-mentee relationship you have?
9. How do you collaborate with your mentee?
10. How frequently do you meet with beginning teachers, teacher induction coordinator, the principal, and district leaders about the progress of teacher induction programs on beginning teachers?
11. To what extent do you feel your role as a mentor impacted your mentee's self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement?
12. What challenges did you face in your role as a mentor of a beginning teacher? How did you cope with the challenges?
13. What improvements could be made to the induction program and your role?
14. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as a mentor?



## **APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR COORDINATORS**

1. What is your age, ethnicity, education level, and position?
2. Describe your experience as a beginning teacher?
3. Did you participant in a teacher induction program? If so, how did it impact your teaching career?
4. What does it mean to be a teacher induction program coordinator?
5. How long have you been a teacher induction coordinator?
6. What type of training or support was provided to you in order for you to effectively support beginning teachers and mentors?
7. How does your role in the teacher induction program support mentors of beginning teachers?
8. What are the criteria used to pair a mentor with a beginning teacher?
9. What training is provided to mentors and beginning teachers before being paired and during the mentoring relationship?
10. How frequently do you meet with beginning teachers, mentors, the principal, and district leaders about the progress of teacher induction programs on beginning teachers?
11. To what extent do you feel your role as a teacher induction coordinator impacted beginning teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement?
12. What challenges did you face in your role as a teacher induction coordinator? How did you cope with the challenges?
13. What improvements could be made to the induction program and your role?
14. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as a teacher induction program coordinator?

## **APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS**

1. What is your age, ethnicity, education level, and position?
2. Describe your experience as a beginning teacher?
3. Did you participant in a teacher induction program? If so, how did it impact your teaching career?
4. What does it mean to be a principal?
5. How long have you been a principal?
6. What type of training or support was provided to you in order for you to effectively support beginning teachers, mentors, and teacher induction coordinators?
7. How do school policies support beginning teachers and mentors?
8. How does the school support the Louisiana's teacher induction program?
9. How do you match or pair mentees with mentors?
10. How often do you meet with beginning teachers, mentors, coordinators, and district leaders about the progress of teacher induction programs on beginning teachers?
11. To what extent do you feel your role as a principal impacted beginning teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement?
12. What challenges did you face in your role as an administrator to beginning teachers?  
How did you cope with the challenges?
13. What improvements could be made to the induction program and your role?
14. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as a principal?

## **APPENDIX I: MEMBER CHECKING**

Dear Dissertation Participant,

As part of my research design, you are welcome to review the transcribed interview and give feedback. If you choose not to review the transcription, there is no further action. Attached is your transcribed interview.

The interview transcript is accurate:

- Agree
- Disagree

Other comments:

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call, text, or email me. Thank you in advanced.

Sincerely,  
Lorita Eichelberger  
Louisiana State University  
P-12 Education Leadership PhD student  
[leiche7@lsu.edu](mailto:leiche7@lsu.edu)  
225-276-5885

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## **VITA**

Lorita Ann Eichelberger was born in Oakland, California and raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Before she attended Louisiana State University A&M, she attended Spelman College, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics in December 2014. The following semester she enrolled in graduate school and received her Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction in August 2017 and Educational Specialist degree in May 2020 from Louisiana State University A&M. Currently, she is a candidate to graduate with her Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership P-12 from Louisiana State University A&M. While attending graduate school, Lorita became a certified teacher to teach secondary level mathematics in the state of Louisiana.